Equivocal Beings

WOMEN IN CULTURE AND SOCIETY
A Series Edited by Catharine R. Stimpson

Equivocal Beings

Politics, Gender, and Sentimentality in the 1790s
Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen

Claudia L. Johnson

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
Chicago & London

CLAUDIA L. JOHNSON is professor of English at Princeton University and the author of *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel*, also published by the University of Chicago Press.

The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 60637
The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., London
© 1995 by The University of Chicago
All rights reserved. Published 1995
Printed in the United States of America

03 02 01 99 98 97 96 95 1 2 3 4 5

ISBN: 0-226-40183-9 (cloth)
ISBN: 0-226-40184-7 (paper)

Johnson , Claudia L.
Equivocal Beings: politics, gender, and sentimentality in the
1790s : Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen / Claudia L. Johnson.
p. cm. -- (Women in culture and society)
Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.
1. English fiction--Women authors--History and criticism.
2. Politics and literature--Great Britain--History--18th century.
3. Women and literature--Great Britain--History and criticism--18th century.
4. English fiction--18th century--History and criticism.
5. Femininity (Psychology) in literature. 6. Sentimentalism in literature.
7. Wollstonecraft, Mary, 1759-1797--Criticism and interpretation.
8. Radcliffe, Ann Ward, 1764-1823--Criticism and interpretation.
9. Burney, Fanny, 1752-1840--Criticism and interpretation.
10. Austen, Jane, 1775-1817--Criticism and interpretation.
11. Authorship--Sex differences. 12. Sex role in literature.
I. Title. II. Series.
PR 858.W6J64 1995
823' .6099287--dc20 94-28979
CIP

♾ The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

For my mother

Foreword by Catharine R. Stimpson ix
Acknowledgments xiii
Abbreviations xv

Introduction

The Age of Chivalry and the Crisis of Gender 1

Part One

Mary Wollstonecraft

1 The Distinction of the Sexes: The *Vindications* 23
2 Embodying the Sentiments: *Mary* and *The Wrongs of Woman* 47

Part Two

Ann Radcliffe

3 Less than Man and More than Woman: *The Romance of the Forest* 73
4 The Sex of Suffering: *The Mysteries of Udolpho* 95
5 Losing the Mother in the Judge: *The Italian* 117

Part Three

Frances Burney

6 Statues, Idiots, Automatons: *Camilla* 141
7 Vindicating the Wrongs of Woman: *The Wanderer* 165

Afterword

Jane Austen

"Not at all what a man should be!": Remaking English Manhood in *Emma* 191
Notes 205
Index 233

In 1790, Edmund Burke, the Anglo-Irish politician and philosopher, published his influential *Reflections on the Revolution in France.* Among other things, the book was a paean to Marie-Antoinette, the Queen of France; an elegy for the "age of chivalry" and the "glory of Europe"; and a warning against revolutionary violence, especially against women. By the end of 1793, French revolutionaries had imprisoned and executed both Marie-Antoinette and her husband, King Louis XVI.

Many Englishmen and Englishwomen knew of Burke. Nearly all, if not all, of them were aware of the revolution that was spreading a few miles away across Channel waters. Among the Englishwomen were four writers of outsized talents: Fanny Burney, who was forty-one when Marie-Antoinette was guillotined; Ann Radcliffe, who was twenty-nine; Mary Wollstonecraft, thirty-four; and Jane Austen, a generation younger, who, at eighteen, was crafting her juvenilia.

What these writers thought and felt during the decade of the 1790s, how their imaginations seized political history and turned it into fiction, is the subject of *Equivocal Beings,* Claudia L. Johnson's brilliant, polished, and witty second book. I admire it. She reads texts with the agility and depth that a wonderful conductor brings to a musical score. I have learned from *Equivocal Beings.* Reading it, I have even laughed out loud, too rare a response to a work of scholarship and criticism.

Johnson's first book was *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel.* Johnson now argues that Austen's achievements—her irony, understatement, and perfect narrative control—have helped to block an adequate reading of the wild crazinesses of her immediate predecessors, although Austen herself read them very well. However, Johnson suggests, we postmoderns have lenses through which we can now see a Burney, a Radcliffe, and a Wollstonecraft more fully and clearly. Not only do we possess such new methods as feminist criticism that enable revisionary readings. Exactly two centuries after the 1790s, our critical climate itself encourages them. For "rupture and privation (now) seem more credible than repose and fulfillment." Many of us delight in rather than shrink from the "grotesqueness . . . flaunted strain, incoherence, and excess" of these women writers (page 31).

The 1790s were notably not a decade of repose and fulfillment but of "profound ideological conflict and reconsolidation" (page 32), of revolution and reaction. How did Burney, Radcliffe, and Wollstonecraft verbally command this world? How did novels and a crises-riven politics conjoin? A great meeting place, upon which Johnson focuses, was "sentimentality." Like anx-

iety, sentimentality has a long, shifting history. At once idea, ideal, ethos, literary trope, behavior, and feeling, sentimentality infused political and domestic domains. Doing so, it was inseparable from theories and practices of gender. During the 1790s, Johnson proposes, male sentimentality was a decidedly male political virtue. But while formerly feminine gender traits (such as tearfulness, irrationality, or susceptibility) were recoded as masculine in order to promote political order, femininity itself, not to mention other kinds of masculinity, became curiously unstable—equivocal—as a result. Gender itself was thrown into question.

Women writers, like all women and men, have never been a monolingual, monolithic, monosyllabic, monotonal bloc. Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, and Burney responded differently to the nexus of "politics, affectivity, and gender" (page 25) connected to their lives and careers, particularly at a time when gender seemed so uncertain yet so central to the well-being of the nation. A democrat and a feminist, Wollstonecraft's stances were oppositional, but her novels also point to the specificity of the female body. Abandoning the homophobia of her nonfiction, they imagine a "proto-lesbian" space (page 96). Exemplars of "exaggerated gothicism," Radcliffe's narratives are "perfect laboratories in which to observe the operations of late sentimentality" (page 146). These laboratories, for better or worse, were impossible for Radcliffe to maintain. After *The Italian* in 1797, she did not publish again during her life. Burney found "male sentimentality upset[ting] all markers of gender" (page 28). Her response was to escalate melodrama, to create deliriously abject heroines—to the point of camp. These excesses also opened out "some thrilling possibilities for women" (page 28).

Equivocal Beings concludes with a meditation on the novel *Emma*, which Jane Austen published in 1816, one year before her death in 1817. By then, Wollstonecraft had been dead for twenty years, although her lurid reputation was alarmingly alive. Radcliffe was to outlast Austen by six years, Burney by twenty-three. Austen's three literary predecessors, Johnson shows, were still at large in her mind when she created *Emma*. For Austen ascribes force, even manliness, to the character Emma. Doing so, she separates sex, being born female or male, from gender, acting out feminine or masculine patterns. This distinction flows from and returns to nourish the conviction that societies first construct gender and then assume that gender constructs societies. Austen's impeccable novels ask, if *sotto voce*, how her society might reconstruct masculinity. How might even a woman claim its rewards and virtues?

Plain speakers traditionally distrust equivocal beings as tricky, deceitful speakers. In one of Shakespeare's best-known scenes, the Porter at MacBeth's castle churlishly expresses this suspicion. As he answers the castle gate, he growls that equivocators "could swear in both the scales against either scale"; they commit treason enough for God's sake (II.iii.10–12). However,

Johnson persuades us to revise, not only our readings of novels, but our evaluation of equivocal beings. The English women writers gathered here treat the challenge of equivocality as an incitement to imagine gender anew, and to invent equivocal plots suited to the representation of harrowing or exciting new possibilities. Equivocal beings also speak during a period of turmoil and conflict, when meanings, like lives, are often uncertain and changing, some being created, some being destroyed, some being refurbished and rebuilt. Explicitly and implicitly, the bold, lavishly weird narratives of Burney, Radcliffe, and Wollstonecraft dramatize such a period. They remind us that if we stand on this or commensurate historical terrain, we will hear a writer's voice fragmenting into many voices—some imprisoning, some freeing, and some whistling in the dark.

Catharine R. Stimpson
Rutgers University (on leave)
Director, Fellows Program, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Many people and institutions have helped make this book possible, and it is a pleasure to be able to acknowledge at least some of them now. Without an NEH Fellowship at the Newberry Library in 1988–89, and a fellowship at the Society for the Humanities at Cornell University in 1993–94, this project would have been neither begun nor completed. I would like to thank specifically Richard Brown at the Newberry and Jonathan Culler at Cornell for their professional magnanimity. I am also grateful to my two readers at the University of Chicago Press, and to colleagues across the country, such as Joanne Cutting-Gray, Edward Duffy, Chris Krueger, Russ Reising, Gene Ruoff, and James Swearingen, who have read parts or all of this book at various stages and whose support and criticism have been trenchant. During the final stages of this project, Jan Fergus was unforgettably generous with her assistance, and Sarah M. Anderson was ever sagacious; I will always be beholden to their kindness. Finally, this project has evolved over six years through countless challenging and sustaining conversations with Lauren Berlant, Debra Fried, and Carol Kay. I can thank them enough only by trying to be equal to their lucidity.

RRF	Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, vol. VIII, *The French Revolution 1790-1794*, ed. L. G. Mitchell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).
VRM	Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Men*, 2nd Edition (London, 1790).
VRW	Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. Carol Poston (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1975), 2nd Edition.
M	Wollstonecraft, *Mary, A Fiction*, ed. Gary Kelly (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 1980.
WW	Wollstonecraft, *The Wrongs of Woman; or Maria*, ed. Gary Kelly (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 1980).
MEM	Godwin, *Memoirs of the Author of 'The Rights of Woman,'* ed. Richard Holmes (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987).
RF	Radcliffe, *The Romance of the Forest*, ed. Chloe Chard (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 1986).
MU	Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, ed. Bonamy Dobrée (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1790)
I	Radcliffe, *The Italian*, ed. Frederick Garber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968).
C	Burney, *Camilla, or, a Picture of Youth*, ed. Edward and Lillian Bloom (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 1983).
WFD	Burney, *The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties*, ed. Margaret A. Doody (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 1991).
E	Austen, *Emma*, vol. IV of the *Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen*, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).
NA	Austen, *Northanger Abbey*, vol. V of the *Oxford Illustrated Jane Austen*, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in,—glittering like the morning-star, full of life, and splendor, and joy. Oh! what a revolution! and what an heart must I have, to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousands swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult.—But the age of chivalry is gone.—That of sophisters, oeconomists, and calculators, has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more, shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprize is gone! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness.

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France,* 126–27

"We are at such prodigious expence of sensibility in public, for tales of sorrow told about pathetically, at a full board, that if we suffered much for our private concerns to boot, we must always meet one another with tears in our eyes. We never weep now, but at dinner, or at some diversion."

Sir Sedley Clarindel, *Camilla,* 473

The Age of Chivalry and the Crisis of Gender

This book ponders the relation between politics and sentimental fiction during the 1790s. The fiction of this period is bizarre and untidy. It has never been as widely or as lovingly read by general readers as that of Defoe, Fielding, and Richardson on the one hand and Austen on the other. And even specialists have tended to hedge their studies with ritual acts of disavowal, as if conceding the badness of the novels under discussion somehow absolved them from having had the poor taste to write (excellent) books about them. Thus J. M. S. Tompkins opens her still indispensable study of late eighteenth-century popular fiction by acknowledging that between "the work of the four great novelists of the mid-eighteenth century and that of Austen there are no names which posterity has consented to call great." Placing herself in this tradition, Marilyn Butler launches her formidable analysis of late eighteenth-century fiction by admitting its artistic inferiority: "With few really good novels to its credit, the movement known as sentimentalism is nevertheless fascinating for the contribution it makes"; and Gary Kelly opens his erudite book about jacobin fiction with what has clearly become an apologetic refrain: "There were no great novels published in England during the 1790s, but there were many interesting ones."[1] To one degree or another, these critics share Ian Watt's view that late eighteenth-century fiction failed to rise above the level of "mediocrity and worse" in large part because "sentimentalism" and "gothic terror" are its principal "literary tendencies."[2] Unlike these critics, I am more staggered than embarrassed by the fiction of this period, but I think it is true that during the 1790s in particular, sentimentalism and gothicism converged to produce a body of novels distinctive first and foremost for their egregious affectivity. In works by Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Godwin, Lewis, and Burney (to name only a few), emotions are saturated in turbulent and disfiguring excess; not simply patently disruptive

emotions—such as ambition, greed, anger, lust—but ostensibly gentler ones as well—such as reverence, sorrow, even filial devotion—are always and obviously going over the top, and then some.

For Watt and others, such excess is lamentable, a failure of aesthetic judgment resulting from misguided authorial decisions to indulge in "fugitive" fads rather than to carry on the great realistic tradition of prose fiction that "rose" earlier in the eighteenth century. Throughout this book, I will argue instead that the fiction of the 1790s is a commanding, imaginative response to a world riven with crisis, a crisis which among other things radically disrupted the notions of verisimilitude Watt considers single and perdurable. What is every bit as conspicuous as the emotional excess of fiction during the 1790s is the political rather than purely psychological import attached to it. When Burney's modish Sir Sedley Clarindel observes in *Camilla*, "We are at such a prodigious expence of sensibility in public, for tales of sorrow told about pathetically," he is explaining that the emotions of private individuals are no longer matters for the private sphere alone. On the contrary, "tales of sorrow" have become public events, he maintains, and dinners and diversions elicit so much of people's weeping that they no longer have tears to spare for "private concerns." Sir Sedley, of course, is not exempt from the rampant exaggeration he alludes to here: in *Camilla,* private individuals have plenty of emotion left over for their own troubles. The importance of having and displaying the right sentiments has not supplanted private emotion, as Sir Sedley playfully suggests. If anything, it has exacerbated it: what and how one feels is a matter of public consequence, and as such subject to one's own as well as to other people's surveillance. During the 1790s, in short, sentimentality is politics made intimate.

In maintaining that the welfare of the nation and the tearfulness of private citizens—actual as well as fictional—were understood in the 1790s to be urgently interconnected, my aim in the following pages is to open feminist literary history out to politics, rather than to advance a Foucauldian claim about the more covert dissemination of powers. To be sure, I am much indebted to scholars who have explored the pervasive, impersonal, and largely inescapable operations of domination in the remotest reaches of such nonpolitical practices as medicine, penal reform, charity, and, of course, novel reading and novel writing.[3] But, contextualizing politics and sentimental fiction in a more specific way, I examine practices—in this case, of course, affective practices—that are understood as blatantly political from the get-go, and that are freighted with tremendous anxiety on this very account. Throughout the 1790s, Edmund Burke's description of the lovely, once ecstatically venerated queen beset in her own bedroom by a gleefully violent band of ruffians bent on her rape and murder, followed by his elegy on the death of chivalry, a portion of which is cited as the epigraph above, was the preeminent, publicly canvassed "tale of sorrow." At the time, most readers recog-

nized that this tale was not an unadulterated narration of historical fact, but itself a scene from the pages of gothic-pathetic literature, and Burke was quite forthright in defending its literary resonances, insisting that insofar as literature still taught us to lament the fall of princesses, it was a better school for morality than enlightenment philosophy. But as I shall argue, Burke's lurid evocation of intense female suffering gave at least as much back to sentimental literature as it initially took, for it not merely exemplified but in turn actually incited, and as a momentous national duty, the sort of susceptibility to pathos Sir Sedley satirizes in *Camilla*. For Burke, the continuance of civil order resulted not from our conviction of the rational or metaphysical rightness of certain obligations or arrangements, but rather from our attachment to customary practices, practices which are unconflictually sustained because we feel emotions of veneration, awe, desire, solicitude, gratitude, loyalty, endearment towards them and towards the persons who represent them. When we turn from Burke's Marie-Antoinette to Burney's dutiful daughter pushed to the edge of death because she fears she has offended her revered father; or to Radcliffe's gothic heroine stepping gingerly through a war-torn landscape she believes to be strewn with dismembered bodies; or to Wollstonecraft's reactionary judge pronouncing a wronged woman insane because she has honored her own feelings rather than those of her odious husband, we encounter plots strained to the breaking point precisely because characters have learned that their feeling is a matter of national security.

Burke regarded the calamity of revolution in France as a crisis of sentiment, and this in turn—as I shall stress—as a crisis of gender. More than any other part of the *Reflections,* Burke's tribute to the "age of chivalry" infuriated, bewildered, gripped, and eventually convinced English readers interested in the political turmoil on the other side of the channel and in the state of the nation at home. The *Reflections* is a long and diverse work—addressing by turns such issues as seventeenth-century English history, ecclesiastical property, paper currency, the French system of political representation, and the ethical effects of English theater. But, early in the 1790s, when most Englishmen still approved of the events in France, it was his passionate celebration of Marie-Antoinette's beauty that seemed to typify everything irrational about his assessment of the French Revolution, and that inaugurated the unsettling and highly politicized phase of sentimentality I shall be discussing throughout this book.[4] To political opponents, Burke's adoration of Marie-Antoinette seemed both beside the point—take Paine's famous put-down about pitying the plumage but forgetting the dying swan—and also unwholesomely servile. Priestley, for example, gets satiric political and sexual mileage out of Burke's fondness for submission: "If, Sir, you profess this 'generous loyalty, this proud submission, this dignified obedience, and this subordination of the heart,' both to *rank and sex,* how concentrated and exalted must be the sentiment, where rank and sex are united! What an *exalted freedom*

would you have felt, had you had the happiness of being a subject of the Empress of Russia; your sovereign, being then a *woman?*"[5] But even allies at first considered Burke's worshipfulness overheated and embarrassing. Upon reading this section in proofs, months before its publication, Sir Philip Francis urged Burke to reconsider: "All that you say of the Queen," he warned, "is pure foppery. If she be a perfect female character you ought to take your ground upon her virtues. If she be the reverse it is ridiculous in any but a Lover, to place her personal charms in opposition to her crimes."[6]

The barbs of radicals never seem to have bothered Burke much; certainly, he never deigned to reply to them. But Burke was stung by Francis's contention that his admiration of the fallen queen amounted to a failure of manliness—"pure foppery." If Burke's response to Francis tells us anything, however, it is that his tribute to "the sensibility" of chivalric "principle" was hardly the ill-considered effusion of a weak moment. Burke not only stood by it, he reiterated it more adamantly:

> I tell you again that the recollection and the contrast between that brilliancy, Splendour, and beauty, with the prostrate Homage of a Nation to her, compared with the abominable Scene of 1789 which I was describing did draw Tears from me and wetted my Paper. These Tears came again into my Eyes almost as often as I lookd [sic] at the description. They may again. You do not believe this fact, or that these are my real feelings, but that the whole is affected, or as you express it, 'downright Foppery.' My friend, I tell you it is truth—and that it is true, and will be true, when you and I are no more, and will exist as long as men—with their Natural feelings exist. I shall say no more on this Foppery of mine.[7]

For Burke, the "abominable scene of 1789" was, among other things, as he put it in the *Reflections,* a "revolution in sentiments, manners, and moral opinions" (RRF 131) that profoundly disrupted what he considered the civilized and civilizing practices of gender. Such is the brilliance of Burke's description of the glittering queen that readers sometimes forget that Burke is not so much lamenting the fall of Marie-Antoinette as he is the fall of sentimentalized manhood, the kind of manhood inclined to venerate her, and this is why he informs Francis that their disagreements are fundamentally about "political opinions and moral sentiments."[8] To him, the queen's particularity—her bruited vices, cabals, and failures of policy, some of which Burke himself acknowledged and deplored elsewhere—was secondary to the broader question of how the manliness of political subjects is affectively constituted.[9] Smarting from the charge of effeminacy, Burke touts the manfulness of his sensitivity: he parades his prostrate homage and vaunts the ever-ready wellspring of his tears. But, as in so much of the *Reflections,* his eloquence here pulls in contradictory directions. Obviously, Burke turns the tables on Francis by declaring that far from being trifling, adoration such as

his will outlive them both, for it is everlastingly masculine, and will last as long as men themselves shall live, *seculi seculorum.* But the same portentous sweep that exalts the unchanging "naturalness" of the masculinity Burke professes also dashes it away. Evidently, "natural feelings" aren't so natural after all: even as Burke writes, the "men" of France are destitute of them, having already ceased by Burke's own formulation, to feel as men and accordingly to be as men, having already rendered his chivalric sentiments anachronistic.

Displays of exorbitant affect are hardly new to the pages of eighteenth-century literature. Well before the 1790s, sentimental novels presented us with sensitive men, men who shed tears (gushes, wellings, droplets) over "interesting" objects, ranging from blasted trees to crippled dogs, to (best of all) distressed, wronged, insane, dying, or dead women. Laurence Sterne's description of "poor Maria" in *Sentimental Journey,* for example, is a conspicuous antecedent to Burke's militant tearfulness. Having been abandoned by her faithless lover, Maria loses her mind, and her delicately murmured raving moves Parson Yorick to vie with her tears: "Maria let me wipe [her tears] away as they fell with my handkerchief.—I then steep'd it in my own, and then in hers—and then in mine—and then I wip'd hers again."[10] Yorick's comically saturated handkerchief here, like Burke's tear-sodden paper in his letter to Francis, testifies to superior humanity—superior, in Sterne's case, to that of materialist philosophers ("I am positive," Yorick intones after his tear-fest with Maria, "I have a soul; nor can all the books with which materialists have pestered the world ever convince me of the contrary"), and in Burke's to that of the "sophisters, oeconomists, and calculators" who have taken over in France. Classic texts of sentimentalism by Samuel Richardson, Henry Mackenzie, Hugh Kelly, Henry Brooke, and Oliver Goldsmith similarly recur to the spectacle of suffering womanhood to elicit the melting humanity of male onlookers, and to make possible their *lacrimo, ergo sum.* Samuel Johnson, who is generally and I think wrongly excluded from the "age of sensibility," engages this trope in *Rasselas,* when the generous young Prince fires his benevolence—and eases his boredom—first by imagining an orphan virgin in distress, and then by giving chase to her treacherous lover in order to secure restitution on her behalf. Johnson's satiric yet indulgent treatment is so suggestive because the distressed and orphaned virgin, burdened as sentimental heroines always are with ludicrously overdetermined pathos, has no existence whatsoever save in Rasselas's fantasy—much as Maria, who cannot perceive herself as Yorick can, is absent to her distress, and much as Burke cries again and again, not over Marie-Antoinette herself, who bears her sorrow like a Roman, but rather over the "description" of her which he himself has wrought.

Burke's vision of Marie-Antoinette is more strenuously heterosexualized than the sentimental outpourings of its often more ironic predecessors, but it is clearly affiliated with the sentimental tradition.[11] His own contemporaries

registered this when they dubbed him Don Dismallo, after that man of sorrows, Don Quixote, and Burke himself seemed to concur when he suggested that tragedians such as Garrick and Siddons foster proper moral and political sentiments better than dissenting ministers such as Price, who preach hard-heartedness and revolution. Although, as we shall see, the history of sentimentality never unfolds too far from the arena of politics, what seemed so unusual about Burke's text is the massive political urgency he attached to affectivity of an exorbitantly erotic sort, even while acknowledging and indeed reveling in its fictiveness. To assert that "the age of chivalry is gone" is to complain that "men of feeling" are being replaced by ferocious *anti*sentimental men unsusceptible to the emotions on which civil order supposedly depends. The work of sentimentality for Burke, then, is to represent the political relations of modern Europe as affectively grounded in benevolizing practices of chivalric heterosexuality. As such, it hardly matters that the queen may not deserve to be adored (Burke admits the licentiousness of her court when he hints that "vice itself los[es] half its evil, by losing all its grossness"), just as it hardly matters that chivalry may only be a "pleasing illusion" (Burke allows that in the cold light of reason a king is just a man, and woman just an animal) so long as such (mis)representations have become sacralized by our customs and ratified by our hearts. In Burke's hands, chivalric sentimentality—"that generous loyalty to rank and sex"—is the affective front of ideology, registering dominant values in and on the bodies of citizens; and it produces reverent political subjects disinclined to rape the queen or to lay a violent hand to the endearing frailty of the state.[12]

Most studies of sentimentality in England focus on its flowering in the 1760s and 1770s, and some date its decline into irretrievable disgrace during the 1790s, precisely the period I discuss here. Janet Todd, for example, has argued that with the French Revolution and its aftermath, conservatives "worked to bind sensibility to radicalism," while Marilyn Butler has similarly contended that conservative writers, insisting upon the uncontested authority of established institutions and practices, feared that sentimentality licensed unleashed subjectivism.[13] There is certainly much evidence to recommend this position, particularly during and after the Terror. Todd demonstrates an antisentimentalist strain in "anti-jacobin" polemics: Gillray's caricature "New Morality" published in the *Antijacobin Review and Magazine* of 1798 shows a hideously disheveled woman representing Sensibility weeping profusely over a dead bird which she holds in one hand, while holding a volume of Rousseau in the other, and using the severed head of Louis XVI as a footrest; and Canning's poem of the same title defines "Sweet SENSIBILITY" as a pernicious moral confusion which places small misfortunes before enormous catastrophes:

False by degrees, and exquisitely wrong;
For the crush'd beetle *first*, — the widow'd dove,
And all the warbled sorrows of the grove;—
Next for poor suff'ring *guilt;* and *last* of all,
For Parents, friends, a king and country's fall.[14]

Persuaded though I am by part of this argument, I find that it underestimates the extent to which reactionary ideology itself also deploys Burkean inflections of sentimentality, particularly once his predictions about the inevitability of terror in France seemed to come true. Even though Canning closes the poem cited above by invoking "manlier virtues, such as nerved/Our fathers' breasts," his verses assail the affective *priorities* of his political opponents, but not sentimentality per se. When Mary Wollstonecraft complained that "sensibility is the *manie* of the day, and compassion the virtue which is to cover a multitude of vices," she was referring not to radical allies who indulged in unregulated grief for dead birds, but rather to the politico-erotic effusions of Burke himself:

> In life, an honest man with a confused understanding is frequently the slave of his habits and the dupe of his feelings, whilst the man with a clearer head and colder heart makes the passions of others bend to his interest; but truly sublime is the character that acts from principle, and governs the inferior springs of activity without slackening their vigour; whose feelings give vital heat to his resolves, but never hurry him into feverish eccentricities.
>
> However, as you have informed us that respect chills love, it is natural to conclude, that all your pretty flights arise from your pampered sensibility; and that, vain of this fancied pre-eminence of organs, you foster every emotion till the fumes, mounting to your brain, dispel the sober suggestions of reason.[15]

Wollstonecraft's critique, which I discuss at length later, gives us a radical and feminist counter-take on the relations among politics, sentimentality, and gender. Whereas Burke had accounted for the political crisis in France at least in part by postulating the ascendancy of monstrously coldhearted men, Wollstonecraft maintains conversely that society is being undermined by feminized, sentimental men. In so doing, she invokes an older standard of rational masculinity, discrediting Burke by ridiculing his failures of manhood—his "pampered sensibility," his hysterical sensitivity, his pretty and artificial flights. Standing for the moment outside sentimental discourse, Wollstonecraft represents the Burkean man of feeling as the mere female of the pre-sentimental tradition of classical and Judeo-Christian culture, a female

whose deficiencies of reason and self-control justify masculine domination: even at his best ("honest"), the sentimental man is "confused" and incapable of responsible self-command (a "slave" to his habits), and so susceptible to flights of passion that he is inadequate to the dignity of full citizenship and thus needs to be governed by strong authority for his own good. Wollstonecraft saw little hope for social change so long as men like Burke unsexed themselves by holding to the sentimental premise that "humanity to women is the characteristic of advancing civilization" (WW 134). To her mind, such "humanity"—at least as Burke construes it in the *Reflections* and in his letter to Francis—reduces men themselves to the status of women, women to the status of children.

As Wollstonecraft's critique invites us to recognize, during the 1790s "men of feeling" were decidedly conservative types, country gentlemen who resisted needed change, who had an aversion to newfangled social ideas, and who exemplified the gallant ways of Old England: men as diverse as Sir Hugh Tyrold in Frances Burney's *Camilla* (1796), Sir Anthony Powerscourt in Jane West's *Tale of the Times* (1799), Squire Falkland in William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794), and even, as I hope to suggest, old Mr. Woodhouse in Austen's *Emma* (1816). To be sure, antijacobin ideologues did sometimes portray reformers as perversely sensitive, but they just as often assailed them for being perversely cold, for failing, in short, to be men, which is to say men of feeling. In his poetical tribute to Burke, William Lisle Bowles specifically praises the enduring power of "Chivalry" to "grace" the "sternness of the manly heart" with "sympathy" and to inspire "Homage and love" rather than "rude desire" for "female worth and meekness."[16] Similarly, in her *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799) Hannah More goes out of her way to attribute political radicalism to "a sort of cold-blooded speculation" and "the saturnine coolness of a geometrical calculation." Following Burke's lead, she attributes the political vices of "modern corrupters" to their constitutional inability to melt sentimentally: "Theirs is an iniquity rather of phlegm than of spirit. . . . This cool, calculating, intellectual wickedness eats out the very heart and core of virtue. . . . Its benumbing touch communicates a torpid sluggishness which paralyzes the soul."[17]

If male proponents of the progressive cause were damned as cold and sexually unresponsive, female proponents were by no means exempt from comparable charges of sexual denaturalization. Richard Polwhele linked women's political heterodoxy to sexual aberrance when he characterized radical women writers as a band of "Unsex'd Females," creatures who, "despising NATURE's law," programmatically eschewed the observance of sexual difference in "the decoration of [their] person" as well as in "the culture of [their] mind." Like Burke, who had depicted the proceedings in France as monstrous because entirely unprecedented, Polwhele stresses the epochal novelty of what "ne'er our fathers saw": females like Wollstonecraft and her

allies. His doggerel labors to paint

> the new unpictur'd scene,
> Where unsex'd woman vaunts the imperious mien,
> Where girls, affecting to dismiss the heart,
> Invoke the Proteus of petrific art.[18]

But what does "unsexing" mean to Polwhele? Indulging in misogynist overkill whereby Medusa and Proteus work by turns, Polwhele is horrified to discover that young girls—who, sweet and soft themselves, should inspire love in men—transform both themselves as well as men into stone by "dismissing the heart." Yet "unsexed" females emphatically do not get that way because they hate men or want to be men, as Lady Macbeth did when she implored the heavens to unsex her. Nor, writing well before the development of homosexuality as an alternative discourse, does he reflexively assume, as today's antifeminists do, that Wollstonecraft assailed men's domination of women through law, education, and statecraft because she was an outlaw to nature's supposed way, heterosexuality. Quite the contrary. For Polwhele, "unsexed" women are "oversexed." Having shed their modesty—a quality in the process of becoming one of the chief markers of sexual difference—they now "walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government" (p. 7), and for Polwhele "government" here carries the public as well as the private sense. What being an unsexed female entails for the defenders of established order, then, is indulging in unbounded heterosexual activity without the heterosexual sentiment, particularly as mediated through modesty, that conduces to the development of tractable, forbearing, and caring political subjects.[19] Polwhele accordingly has his wrongheaded Wollstonecraftean mouthpiece lambaste women's endearing "artifice," their way of "winning fond regard" by their "weakness," their "eyes" that charmingly "sparkle from their blushes" (p. 18); and he ridicules her suggestion that girls overcome false delicacy by studying plant reproduction as being no less than "Instructions in Priapism" (p. 26).[20] Far from disallowing the moral efficacy of chivalric sentimentality, then, Polwhele insists on it as strenuously, if not as gallantly, as Burke had. And (in an inconsistency that would not be lost on Wollstonecraft) though one might expect him to abominate the arch-republican Rousseau, he appears placidly to concur with his contention that the proper "empire of women is the empire of softness—of address; their commands, are caresses; their menaces, are tears" (p. 17). Polwhele faults Wollstonecraft precisely for refusing to believe that strategically delicate eroticism is woman's proper path of empowerment. When he turns to his positive example of femininity—exemplified by Hannah More—he praises her for binding an "obedient throng" of men in "silken fetters," gaining vast "influ-

ence o'er the social ties" (p. 42) because her virtues are female ones. The reviewer for the *Antijacobin Review and Magazine* heartily agrees that More "will be read as long as sensibility and good taste shall exist among us."[21]

Polwhele's effort to link proper sentiments of sex to proper politics was certainly not unique. The *Antijacobin Review and Magazine,* the self-appointed watchdog for John Bull during a time of war, considered the inculcation and enforcement of right sentiments about heterosexuality a major aspect of its charter. Indeed, the preface to the collected issues of 1799 damns the *Monthly Review* for conspiring "to eradicate from the female bosom all sense of modesty, every principle of virtue, every sentiment and every feeling that command respect and conciliate esteem."[22] Accordingly, when it might just as well have damned radical publications with silence, it duly reviews and, needless to say, censures Godwin's *Memoirs,* Charlotte Smith's progressive *The Young Philosopher* (1798), Mary Hays's fiction and her *Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in Behalf of Women* (1798); and it warmly praises such counterrevolutionary works as Polwhele's "The Unsex'd Females" and More's *Strictures.* The extent of its commitment to sentimental heterosexuality can be gauged by comparing the relatively scant attention it pays to a complex and ideologically conflicted novel like *The Italian* (1798) by Ann Radcliffe, who was very highly respected, with the considerable attention and space it devotes to Madame de Genlis's propagandistic *The Rival Mothers; or, Calumny* (1800), despite its frankly acknowledged defects. The more firmly to reimplant sexual sentiments which are being uprooted by radical agitators, the reviewer recommends de Genlis's heavily didactic "picture of refined *love*—we mean *sexual passion*" by quoting lengthy passages detailing the heroine's relish for her feminine abjection and her intense pleasure ("Oh! . . . Oh! . . . Ah! . . . ") in the chivalric solicitude of her husband:

> Oh! how wise and beneficent was nature in creating us feeble and timid, and in giving to men, only, strength, courage, and superiority! This was preparing the ties of an affecting and sacred union, formed, on the one hand, by generous protection; and, on the other, by the want of support, and by gratitude. . . . Oh! how much sweeter is it to me to stand in need of you, to call you to my assistance, to put myself under your protection, than it would be, to be able to dispense with it! What enjoyments of self-love can equal those of the heart! . . . Ah! when your will directs me, I sacrifice nothing to you, I gratify myself, I obey my real impulse.

No wonder the reviewer exclaims "What will the disciples of Mary Wollstonecraft say to these sentiments!" If radical women had unsexed themselves as well as the female readers who came upon their novels unawares, then the reviewers for the *Antijacobin Review and Magazine* would recommend de Genlis's novel as a resexing, refeminizing corrective, "a pattern for wives and mothers," and it would champion this novel as "not merely *unexception-*

able" but "highly praiseworthy."[23]

As the foregoing discussion indicates, in addition to giving rise to what is now termed the "war of ideas,"[24] the political rupture of the 1790s also gave rise to a war of sentiments about sex, a war in which controversialists, each intensely invested in heterosexual feeling as a foundational political virtue, routinely charge their opponents with deviance of the direst possible consequence, for the fate of the nation is understood on all sides to be tied up with the right heterosexual sentiment of its citizens. For Burke, as we have seen, revolutionary men are not men at all; destitute of "austere and masculine morality" (RRF 88) they are wild and de-"natured" monsters stripping their state and their queen. For Wollstonecraft, by contrast, Burke's hothouse sexuality actually serves to pervert the sentiments and to vitiate rather than invigorate the state. Like all fops, he admires women so much he has become like one, and before long he may follow the example of other, hypersexualized men and begin to hanker for something "more soft than woman" and travel to "Italy and Portugal" in order to "attend the levees of equivocal beings," as Wollstonecraft termed homosexuals (VRW 138). And finally for a vast array of her own critics, Wollstonecraft's radicalism seemed to be of a piece with her attempt to confound sexual difference. The index to the 1798 issue of the *Antijacobin Review,* for example, lists Wollstonecraft under "P" for "prostitute," a human creature distinct from normal, "modest" women because she takes active pleasure in her profession. In his antijacobin novel *Modern Literature* (1804), Robert Bisset depicts his Wollstonecraftean "female champion" urging women's involvement in masculine activities—"soldiers, sailors, senators, politicians, scholars, philosophers, and rakes; they were also to be coachmen, postilions, blacksmiths, carpenters, coal-heavers, &c. . . . She trusted the time would soon arrive when the sex would acquire high renown in boxing matches, sword and pistol."[25]

Under the sentimental dispensation contemptuously referred to by Wollstonecraft as the "*manie* of the day," gender codes have not simply been reversed. They have been fundamentally disrupted, and this is why Wollstonecraft's intensely homophobic phrase "equivocal beings" is so germane. As we shall see again and again, the conservative insistence upon the urgency of chivalric sentimentality fundamentally unsettled gender itself, leaving women without a distinct gender site. Under sentimentality, all women risk becoming equivocal beings. A particularly painful instance comes to mind in Godwin's *Memoirs.* Anxious to "defend" Wollstonecraft from the aspersion of being unsexed and unfeminine, Godwin goes out of his way to describe Wollstonecraft's sensitivity, but his effort backfires disastrously: "[W]e not unfrequently meet with persons endowed with the most exquisite and delicious sensibility, whose minds seem almost of too fine a texture to encounter the vicissitudes of human affairs, to whom pleasure is transport, and disap-

pointment is again indescribable. This character is finely portrayed by the author of *The Sorrows of Werter*. Mary was in this respect a female Werter" (MEM 242). Leave aside the fact that Wollstonecraft would not have appreciated being called a "female Werter [*sic*]." My point here is that during the 1790s, sentimentalized masculinity is so prevalent that even when Godwin attempts to describe Wollstonecraft's *feminine* delicacy, he can only do so by in effect unsexing her, stating that she is a female mutation of a *male* hero, a man whose exquisite, delicious, and finely textured sensibility mark him *not* as effeminate (as Wollstonecraft herself might have argued) but as an estimable man of feeling. As Wollstonecraft, Burney, and Radcliffe severally show, sentimental man, having taken over once-feminine attributes, leaves to women only two choices: either the equivocal or the hyperfeminine. For if the man Werther is already the culture's paragon of feeling, then any feeling differentially attributed to women must be excessively delicate, morbidly *over*-sensitive.

Sentimentality has a long and exceedingly complex history tied in with the civil war in seventeenth-century England, with theological debates, and with evolving medical discourses about the nervous system.[26] For intellectual historians of the early twentieth century, of course, sentimentality and its various epiphenomena—like fads for graveyard poetry and ruins—were considered to be little more than peculiarities in the history of taste, and the "man of feeling" who indulged them the object of antiquarian and somewhat bemused regard.[27] Historians of ideas labored to make the "man of feeling" seem less idiosyncratic—and, one suspects, less contemptible—by tracing his "genealogy" back to late-seventeenth-century Cambridge platonists and latitudinarian divines who touted the spontaneous feelings of sympathy in the breast of the good-natured man. As R. S. Crane explained it, "the whole movement of sentimentalism" becomes "somewhat more intelligible historically" once we see it as "the propaganda of benevolence and tender feeling carried on with increasing intensity since the Restoration by the anti-Puritan, anti-Stoic, and anti-Hobbesian divines of the Latitudinarian school."[28] But while this philosophical-theological pedigree accounted for the cultural ascendancy of the man of feeling and granted him a certain dignity, it framed his importance within rather general debates about the goodness or the badness of human nature, without reference to the seventeenth-century political crisis that made such debates so pressing in the first place. Scholars such as Kay, Mullan, and Markley have rectified this omission by demonstrating the larger political import of sociability and sympathy.[29] Himself writing in the wake of civil war, Hobbes had gleefully insisted on man's passionateness, antisociality, and unreason in order to humiliate us into acknowledging our need for authority to settle every aspect of our life; without that authority any dispute—given the dimness of man's

reason and the contentiousness of his disposition—could conceivably become the basis for a civil war. Latitudinarians and sympathy theorists transformed Hobbes's emasculating assaults on antisocial man's passionateness into tributes to sociable man's sensitivity. Emerging at least in part from debates about the state in political philosophy, then, sentimentality renders Hobbes's absolute sovereign superfluous. Because the subjects of the state are sensitive to each other's approval and disapproval—craving the former and avoiding the latter—they observe and sustain shared customs without requiring the intervention of authoritarian rule.[30]

At the same time, and related to this, sentimentality is also understood throughout the eighteenth century itself to be a constitutive element of "polite culture," where "polite" refers principally to the increased presence of and deference to women in social life, and to the belief that the sociable commingling of the sexes promoted the polish and refinement of men.[31] It was axiomatic to writers as diverse as Montesquieu, Hume, Rousseau, Burke, and even Hannah More that "modern society" was different from the ancient or "barbarous" world insofar as it accommodated the increasingly refined converse of the sexes, and promoted the sorts of commerce and arts necessary to help make the sexes mutually agreeable to each other.[32] In an essay which insists that Burke's famous representation of Marie-Antoinette is rooted more in beliefs about the political economy of "polite society" than in psychosexual pathology, J. G. A. Pocock explains that for Burke "the rise of chivalry, with all its extravagances, was a revolution in manners occurring within the feudal world, by which barbarian warriors had begun to civilize themselves, to acquire more polished and humane modes of conduct towards the weak, the female, and one another, and to promote the increased circulation of material goods and the skills entailed in producing them. It had been a major step in the direction of a commercial and polite society and the cultural characteristics that went with them."[33] Building on such conclusions, G. J. Barker-Benfield has copiously demonstrated how this widespread and decidedly heterosocial "culture of sensibility" fostered cultural phenomena as diverse as evangelicalism, consumerism, campaigns against cruelty to animals, and societies for the reformation of manners.[34]

Drawing on the work of these social, literary, and political historians, I take as my starting point the function of sentimentality within the public sphere. But precisely because sentimentality emerges from heterosocial culture and appears to value and at times even to fetishize women's presence there, it is immensely important to consider the differential of sex. In this respect I take my cue once again from Carol Kay's discussion of "remasculinization" in Sterne, in whose work she detects the anxiety of "the modern domesticated male, who fears that his civilized polish and sensitive feeling is a kind of womanishness" and who as a result "finds a new way of asserting his masculine superiority over the women he comes close to."[35] Kay's

insight into the competitiveness over the prized quality of sensitivity invites us to rethink the ways in which we have theorized sentimentality itself. As the following chapters shall show, woman's presence in a sentimental public sphere is not to be confused with her empowerment there. Whereas many literary and social historians hold that sentimentality spelled the "feminization" of culture in general and of men in particular, I will maintain that during the period in question, sentimentality entailed instead the "masculinization" of formerly feminine gender traits, and that the affective practices associated with it are valued *not* because they are understood as feminine, but precisely and only insofar as they have been recoded as masculine. Sentimentality may seem to promise a socially productive parity between the sexes because it makes it not only acceptable but also prestigious for men to engage in and display behaviors classically associated with women: fainting, weeping, blushing, being overpowered by feeling, and even (as Burke would contend) overcome by prejudice. This parity might seem to promise some emancipation. But finally, only men have legitimate access to the discourse of the heart, and of course only certain men at that. The sentiment celebrated in very different ways by Sterne, Goldsmith, Burke, and Rousseau validates male authority figures by representing them as men of feeling, but it also bars the women whose distress occasions their affective displays from enjoying any comparable moral authority by representing their affectivity as inferior, unconscious, unruly, or even criminal.[36]

Crowded with outrageous and rigidly gendered contests over the dignity of meaningful suffering, the works of Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, and Burney culminate as well as assail the sentimental tradition at precisely that moment when it is being reasserted in extreme forms as a political imperative. While their works are connected to one another's through rich channels of direct and indirect influence—Burney and Wollstonecraft, for example, demonstrably read and pondered each other's as well as Radcliffe's works, and Radcliffe is listed as a subscriber to Burney's *Camilla*—contemporaries rarely grouped them together as I have done. Polwhele himself, for example, divides women writers into two camps, one including "female advocates of Democracy" (p. 12), and the other chaste British matrons, relegating Wollstonecraft to the first of course, and Radcliffe and Burney to the second.[37] On the face of it, this division makes some sense. The most theorized of the writers brought together here, Wollstonecraft is a committed radical, and even before the onset of the political crisis Burke apostrophizes—the *Reflections*, after all, provoked Wollstonecraft to commence her career as a polemical writer—she was wondering about the political character of sexual sentiments. Burney also intervened consciously in the politics of the 1790s, though her positions are considerably more ambivalent and less thought through than Wollstonecraft's. On the score of gender, at least, her sympathies are

often quite progressive, but her other loyalties—to the English monarchy, to Edmund Burke, to her émigré husband, to name only a few—align her with the reaction, and her one piece of polemical writing, her *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy* (1793), was written on its behalf. Though Burney's early work lodges extraordinarily trenchant social criticism—Margaret Doody considers *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress* (1782) a Jacobin novel before the fact—her last two novels show how heavily the reaction weighed upon her.[38] Turning from these figures to Radcliffe poses obvious challenges. While Radcliffe's early work appears comfortable with a Rousseauvian discourse about liberty, her biography provides no comparably direct polemical point of entry into the social and political scene of the 1790s.

But for those of us interested as I am in exploring how political crisis enters the narrative imagination, a strong case can be made for conjoining Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, and Burney despite apparent obstacles. Their careers are organized around the nexus of politics, affectivity, and gender that I am sketching here. Burke's evocation of savage violence against womanhood may have been addressed to men, but the women of England were listening very intently. Once the Terror was in full swing, they were shocked by grisly, Burkean-inflected tales about Marie-Antoinette's fate at the guillotine and about the rape and dismemberment of the daughters and wives of private citizens because, in Linda Colley's words, such stories "raised the issues of what, if anything, was due to female vulnerability, of just how safe women were, in fact." As Colley observes, "Pamphleteers, cartoonists and above all, clergymen summoned up all the threats of pillage, massacre and rape at the hands of the invading French soldiery" in order to enforce "the twin themes of the peculiar safety of British women and of their danger from the French." But despite these efforts, English women did not always feel so safe under an ostensibly chivalric dispensation that claimed to adore and protect them.[39] The fiction promoted by Cruikshank's antirevolutionary caricature "The Doctor Indulged with His Favorite Scene," reproduced on the cover of this book, is that British radicals such as Richard Price triumph in the savage sexual cruelty of French insurgents, but the fact is that the very vivid scene he is watching through the keyhole—the storming of the queen's bedchamber, the stabbing of her bed with swords and daggers, and the hairsbreadth escape of a terrified, "almost naked" queen—comes to us from Burke himself. It is clear to each of the writers I discuss here that the spectacle of immanent and outrageous female suffering may not be the unthinkable crime which chivalric sentimentality forestalls, but rather the one-thing-needful to solicit male tears and the virtues that supposedly flow with them, and the preposterousness of their work emerges from and engages this horrifying realization.

For Wollstonecraft chivalric sentimentality insures both the oppression of mankind under monarchy and the domination of women by men. Though her early career is marked by hope that republican masculinity—as distinct

from chivalric masculinity—can save men and women alike from such degradation, her late work appears to conclude that the poison of sentimentality is so pervasive that even republican men have become contaminated by it. The *Vindications* damn sentimental culture as voluptuous and amoral, but the novels try to invent narratives that resist the heterosexual plot as irreparably tainted by sentimentality. The weirdly elliptical protolesbian narrative of *Mary* undomesticates female desire, and *The Wrongs of Woman* deheterosexualizes republican domesticity altogether, representing the "manly" couple finally as a pair of females, acting as comothers to a girl-child, and as citizens in a world that cannot as yet accommodate them.

Radcliffe's work is certainly not oppositional, as is Wollstonecraft's, but it is nevertheless permeated with political discourses of the 1790s, and while these are worked out in often wildly contradictory ways, at the outset of the 1790s they are unmistakably if tepidly progressive, and show increasing symptoms of strain as the reaction wears on. My intertextual readings here shall thus counter a tendency to psychologize her fiction by restoring the political referents of its tropes and iconography: the "banditti" that populate her novels may look a little less like the colorful, charmingly aestheticized little miscreants they are usually taken for if we recollect that the *Times,* for instance, routinely used the term "banditti" to designate insurgents who took to the streets of Paris during the Terror, displaying the body parts of women and children on pikes. Obsessively restaging the confounding spectacle of exorbitant female suffering appropriated by men of feeling, Radcliffe's novels tend to prohibit female complaint. Despite their feminine virtue—with the passivity this traditionally entails—her heroines thus become equivocal beings in that they alone must also shoulder the once-masculine virtues of stoic rationalism and self-control. At times, this repudiation of female sensibility looks like a Wollstonecraftean gain in rational dignity; at others, her novels fantasize idyls of *female* society which fall outside the rigors of such discipline and challenge the sentimental premise that heterosexual affect is the basis for virtue. But Radcliffe's fiction finally, if only conventionally, honors the authority of male affectivity and the growing force of reaction. In her nonfiction and fiction alike, Wollstonecraft protests the "wrongs of women"; conversely, Radcliffe gothically represents these wrongs only to concede in the end that they never "really" happened.

In Burney's fiction, male sentimentality upsets all markers of gender. The novels articulate two discrete responses to this disruption. On one hand, they imply a horror at the disruptions effected by sentimentality, for in her novels (as in Radcliffe's) female affectivity—indeed, female subjectivity itself—is cast into doubt as culpable, histrionic, and grotesque. Burney's fiction abounds in strong females who take up the severity and fortitude sentimental men have relinquished. But while Wollstonecraft likes to imagine a nation of manly women exerting their powers to guide and admonish, Burney is dis-

comfited by the disciplinary ire of virile females, and if the exuberant suffering in Burney's fiction reproaches the ineptitude of men of feeling, it also reproaches virile females for their failures of maternal nurturance. But on the other hand, Burney allows for the enjoyment of sentimental excess when it is used to elude rather than enforce heterosexuality. The wedge between sex and gender driven by sentimentality can open out some thrilling possibilities for women: while the sensitive men in *Camilla* blush, quiver, or take to their beds, Mrs. Arlbery gallantly flirts with Camilla, her "conquest"; in *The Wanderer,* Lady Aurora is endeared to the distressed Juliet, and generously styles herself her "chevalier."

To introduce women's feelings into the discussion of a tradition that makes a spectacle of their suffering without granting their agency, or even to some degree their subjectivity, is to scramble the criteria by which we customarily determine political as well as literary affiliations. Wollstonecraft quarrels with Rousseau as well as Burke because she recognizes that male sentimentality turns even politically progressive men into sexually oppressive ones; and writers such as Radcliffe and Burney, who do not challenge conservative principles on the level of theory, nevertheless consistently tarnish the authority of tearful fathers, brothers, and sweethearts on the level of narrative. The flagrancy of female suffering so copiously represented in these novels—suffering that matches anything Burke ever conjured in his own sensationalistic, gothic-pathetic modes—is surpassed only by the strenuousness of the heroines' inhibitions about articulating it, for under sentimentality the prestige of suffering belongs to men. Their works thus disclose as well as protest the peculiar contradictions of sentimentality, which appears generously to value women—"humanity to women is the characteristic of advancing civilization," as Wollstonecraft acidly put it—yet which at the same time both exacts their suffering and takes it away from them; which urgently (if variously) insists on heterosexuality as a political duty, yet at the same time unsettles customary definitions of gender and sexuality both *between* and *within* the sexes, problematizing both femininity as well as other versions of masculinity. Under such circumstances, not female propriety alone but female being itself is almost impossible to negotiate.

Not long ago, as we have already seen, the texts I discuss here were an embarrassment to literary history. Developments in feminism, psychoanalysis, gender studies, and new literary history have helped to restore the literature of the 1790s to prominence. Yet even though no one today would dismiss the fiction of the 1790s as magisterially as Watt did, and even though splendid editions of Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, and Burney are now available—which was hardly the case as recently as ten years ago—there is some evidence that their work is only beginning to be fully reckoned with. In the account of the history of the novel given in Nancy Armstrong's *Desire and Domestic Fic-*

tion, for example, women's fiction of the 1790s—with its explicitly and implicitly political programs—has no place. Accordingly, though broad interests in politics, sentimentality, and gender animate my work here, at least one of my aims as a literary historian is to restore these figures to the prestige they once enjoyed. To be fair, I suspect that Jane Austen has something do with the neglect into which they have fallen since their own time. If their work "failed" to conform to the standards of realism and quality on which Watt and others explicitly or implicitly relied, they also "failed" to be what many critics thought novels, especially novels by women, ought to be: exquisitely controlled, serenely apolitical, and archly unassuming—like Austen's supposed cameos of "domestic" life.

Having myself argued for Austen's engagement in many of the politicized debates of the 1790s—when the boundaries between the public and the private were still under construction, and when no discursive mode, least of all the novel, was seen as intrinsically nonpolitical—I obviously do not agree that Austen's work itself is so "limited" in the first place. But compared with the brief yet startlingly expansive sketches of Wollstonecraft, the hypnotic capaciousness of Radcliffe's novels, and the crazed plenitude of Burney's, her novels do indeed proceed by exclusion and decrescendo. Notably absent from her plots are the ostentatious affectivity, the frantic contentiousness over suffering, and the sexual equivocality generated by male sentimentality itself that mark the plots of her (only slightly) older contemporaries. Excision has its benefits. Unlike those of so many of her contemporaries, Austen's novels do *not* feature ritually anathematized feminists; nor, conversely, do they feature hideously sensitive ladies who weep over French novels one minute and savagely brutalize their servants the next; nor again do they obsessively recur to the figure of the persecuted and misunderstood heroine at the knees of her tearful father, though *Mansfield Park* sometimes comes close. Thanks in part to such exclusions, Austen's novels can largely take for granted what is elsewhere so painfully contested. Female subjectivity is not forbidden, degraded, or displaced.

But there are losses too. Austen's strategic exclusions succeeded so well that she recharted the map of literary history, making her predecessors curiously inaccessible from the routes she provided. If we go to Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, and Burney looking for Austenian economy, circumscription, and stylistic control discernible at even the smallest units of signification, they will read like failures. But irony and understatement aren't the only legitimate artistic modes, and Austen's "mastery" of them no longer seems so self-evidently attractive to us now.[40] Indeed, in our present critical climate, where rupture and privation seem more credible than repose and fulfillment, we are better positioned than formerly to enjoy the very qualities that were felt to disgrace the texts of Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, and Burney—their grotesqueness, their flaunted strain, incoherence, and excess—and to recognize these

both as valuable indices of the ideological conflict they address and reproduce and as estimable artistic choices of representation and critique during a period of profound ideological conflict and reconsolidation. These often gaudily plotted works reward the same patient and detailed reading we typically reserve for Austen's more tempered fiction, and their very differences from Austen have much to teach us about how narrative is ideologically encoded. In the interstices of Wollstonecraftean fragments, or off on the peripheries of Radcliffe's and Burney's huge canvases, we glimpse not only the harrowing indeterminacy of "equivocal being," but also emancipatory possibilities that Austen rarely attempts: resistances to the uncomfortably overladen heterosexual spousal or parental plot, and vergings onto homosocial and homoerotic narrative that bypass male sentimentality as well as (in Burney's phrase) the "FEMALE DIFFICULTIES" to which it inevitably leads.

Ann Radcliffe

Less than Man and More than Woman: The Romance of the Forest

When we first see Adeline, the heroine of Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* (1791), she has been imprisoned in an isolated house by her father, who has left her there to be murdered by hired ruffians because he cannot tolerate her refusal to become a nun. Fortunately, in *The Romance of the Forest*, even ruffians have hearts, though the aristocrats who employ them do not. Unable to carry out their orders, the ruffians waylay Pierre de La Motte, himself fleeing the law for gambling debts. They give La Motte the following choice: to take Adeline away with him or to die. One look at the "beautiful girl" (RF 5) decides the question: "She sunk at his feet, and with supplicating eyes, that streamed with tears, implored him to have pity on her. Notwithstanding his present agitation, he found it impossible to contemplate the beauty and distress of the object before him with indifference. Her youth, her apparent innocence—the artless energy of her manner forcibly assailed his heart" (RF 5–6). La Motte, as the novel repeatedly shows, is a coward. But Adeline's "beauty and distress" clearly make a man out of him. And though her presence exposes him to more danger, he brings Adeline into his family, and together they take refuge in a deserted old abbey in the heart of a forest.

Radcliffe keeps returning to the both seductive and invigorating appeal of Adeline's distress. Later, when strangers intrude upon the asylum of this outlaw household, she faints, once again becoming "an object not to be contemplated with indifference" (RF 87): "Her beauty, touched with the languid delicacy of illness, gained from sentiment what it lost in bloom. The negligence of her dress, loosened for the purpose of freer respiration, discovered those glowing charms, which her auburn tresses, that fell in profusion over her bosom, shaded, but could not conceal" (RF 87). Obviously, Adeline's "glowing charms" solicit not reason, not sexually neutral "humanity" of sexually nonspecific onlookers, but heterosexual manhood in particular:

Adeline's body arouses varying degrees and admixtures of tenderness and desire in the gentlemen bending over her. Although most of the novel is devoted to working out the competing interests these men take in Adeline, within the terms of the novel it would be "unnatural" and ethically suspect for them *not* to respond as they do.

I open with a consideration of these scenes because their pornographic charge is neither cheap nor adventitious, but is the central element in the ethos of sentimental heterosexuality under discussion throughout this book. This novel often throws Adeline's camlet open "at the bosom, upon which part of her hair had fallen in disorder" (RF 7) because it presumes that heterosexual passion is the "natural" basis of ethical conduct, and that, with the occasional exception of Adeline herself, moral agents are males. The first words of *The Romance of the Forest,* an epigraph drawn from *Macbeth,* are "I am a man" (RF 1), and these words signal the novel's central preoccupation: masculinity. Throughout, Radcliffe draws heavily from *Macbeth* in order to interrogate the categories "man" and "nature," which sentimental ideology reformulated. Even the many debates here about doctoring of different sorts—material which would otherwise seem irrelevant—ask the same question: to make "man" healthy, should we resist or follow his "nature?" In *The Romance of the Forest,* Radcliffe rewrites *Macbeth* for a sentimental age, reversing many of Shakespeare's nonsentimental assumptions about manliness and civil order. In acceding to the influence of a woman Macbeth becomes less than a man. He sins against authority and strength, and his crime—the murder of a king—is cataclysmic because it violates the principle of subordination according to which nature is supposedly ordered. Other factors, of course, converge to overdetermine the monstrousness of Macbeth's deed: Duncan is also a guest, a kinsman, a kind man. But in a play where an authoritarian model of civil order is naturalized, it is a transgression against hierarchy that makes horses eat each other.[1]

The Romance of the Forest, by contrast, situates itself squarely within a positive discourse about male sentimentality, a version which is different from Burke's in that it is progressive and antiaristocratic, but like it in virtually every other respect. At least until the final pages of this novel realign the plot with *Macbeth,* unfeeling men err by plotting violence not against the strength and power of other men, but rather against the natural weakness of women that should endear. Virtuous manhood is defined by the kind and degree of its responsiveness to women, and the crime the novel deplores as unnatural is the murder of a woman. The opening chapter, it is true, gives some space to a competing discourse of moral rationalism. While describing the cowardice of La Motte, the narrator observes: "He was a man whose passions often overcame his reason. . . . With strength of mind sufficient to have withstood temptation, he would have been a good man; as it was, he

was always a weak, and sometimes a vicious member of society. . . . He was a man infirm in purpose and visionary in virtue: in a word, his conduct was suggested by feeling" (RF 2). This series of moral formulae is striking for its inaptness. La Motte is at his best only when he gives way to his feelings, especially for Adeline, without the intervention of reason. *The Romance of the Forest* shows us that manly feeling must be disciplined, but it never doubts that good men are men whose conduct is "suggested by feeling."

Fleeing the rage of her father, Adeline finds herself in the households of three different men in each of the three successive volumes of the novel: first, in that of La Motte, so vitiated by city life that his parental and conjugal feelings are weakened by his terror of losing face in the eyes of the world; second, at the villa of the Marquis de Montalt, whose household is a sex palace where, with genteel erotica, aphrodisiac collations of confections, ices, and liquors, and a bevy of depraved demoiselles, he urges Adeline to succumb to his passion—at least until he discovers that she is the daughter of the brother he has murdered, whereupon he tries to kill her; and third, at the humble chateau of the good pastor La Luc, Radcliffe's Savoyard vicar, who lives in virtuous retirement from the corrupting world, loving God, nature, family, and mankind with honorable passions. Clearly, the conduct of all three men is "suggested by feeling" and their moral development is to be measured by their passionate receptivity to Adeline herself. As we shall see, the discourse of moral rationalism, which though vestigial still commands some sway, surfaces when it is necessary to differentiate bad (effeminate) men of feeling from good (manly) men of feeling, but the novel never hints that "man" should be actuated by "reason" rather than "feeling." Adeline is only really at risk where feeling is blocked.

The Romance of the Forest harkens back to *Macbeth* to pose questions about the relationship between moral and political stability and different constructions of masculinity, but its answers affiliate the novel to contemporary, decidedly progressive texts—to Rousseau's *Emile,* which narrates how education may restore "man" to the condition "nature" fitted him for, and intertextually to later works such as Wollstonecraft's and Paine's respective vindications of the natural rights of man, and to novels such as Bage's *Man As He Is* (1792) and *Hermsprong; or, Man As He Is Not* (1796). This claim may sound strange given a novelist whose relationship to publicity, let alone to controversy, has been seen as attenuated. In part because Radcliffe was so withdrawn from the public, many assume that she was either untouched by the world of public events, or, like any "proper" woman, stoutly, though reflexively, orthodox in all things. Although critics have subjected Radcliffean themes—about domesticity, female propriety, and aesthetics—to political interpretation, she is generally not supposed to have been much aware of the ideological conflicts raging during the years she was publishing, 1789–97.[2] Generations of detractors considered Radcliffean gothic as

escapist, and her descriptions of landscape as derivative, "literary" in the weak, female sense, and thus without significant referent.[3] And much of the best criticism of Radcliffean gothic has been psychoanalytic, at least in part because it has been so easy to believe that decaying castles could not possibly represent actual, material features of the European countryside inscribing the still surviving feudal past, but instead must represent an inward landscape sealed off from history; and that heroines' conflicts with fathers or guardians obviously reflect not anxieties about property rights, but traumas about maternity or sexuality that look the same across the centuries spanning Radcliffe's era and our own.[4]

But *The Romance of the Forest,* like Radcliffe's later fiction, readily displays not only its talent at suspense, but also its erudition on subjects as diverse as beauty, sublimity, ethics, and national character. Given the virtuosity of their plotting and the richness of their allusion, it is surprising just how little Radcliffe's works have received in the way of sustained analysis.[5] I will mount close readings of her major novels because they are perfect laboratories in which to observe the operations of late sentimentality, highlighted as these are by the excess of the gothic mode. In her novels the strain that the gothic already places on the courtship plot—who can worry about marriage when there are corpses stashed behind the curtains?—is redoubled by the strain sentimentality puts on gender: valorous women and tearful men make odd couples. Once dismissed as rarefied and hermetic, her plots are actually quite extroverted. As Ronald Paulson has put it, during the 1790s the "castle, prison, tyrant, and sensitive young girl could no longer be presented naively; they had all been familiarized and sophisticated by the events in France."[6] This does not mean that Radcliffe writes with Wollstonecraft's partisan engagement, or that her novels are political allegories keyed to the good and bad guys of the French Revolution. It does mean that her fiction welcomes the intensity that comes along with the politicization Paulson describes. What distinguishes *The Romance of the Forest* from Radcliffe's earlier *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne* (1789) and *A Sicilian Romance* (1790), fascinating though these early novels are in the sheer accretion of their conventionality, is its effort to harness gothic mood and machinery to issues circulating in the public sphere, and its experimentation with anachronism as a means of conducting social criticism. When two characters discuss "the national characters of the French and English" (RF 268), pondering in particular how the French can be cheerful despite the "wretched policy" of their country, Radcliffe composes a footnote informing her readers, "It must be remembered that this was said in the seventeenth century" (RF 269). At first glance, this note appears calculated, as Chloe Chard has maintained, to disclaim the novel's "relevance to contemporary politics."[7] But far from arresting confusion between the "past" and the "present," the note does the opposite, calling attention to the plausibility of the "confusion," intensifying

he political resonance of a novel which discusses the social compact and dramatizes the relationship between social and political structures and personal happiness.

Besides, in 1791 political referents, direct or indirect, need not have been concealed. The bland Rousseauism of *The Romance of the Forest*—the value it places on republican independence, virtuous retirement, and sentimental domesticity, and the suspicion in which it holds the distinctions and refinements of aristocratic society—was hardly dangerous. It could square with a native tradition of political mythology about the wholesome liberty of Englishmen and the contrasting decadence of absolute monarchy in France.[8] As if to underscore this myth, La Luc is specifically made to be "partial to the English," an admirer of "their character, and the constitution of their laws" (RF 260). Written when Burke's *Reflections* was a minority opinion, *The Romance of the Forest* represents "the Bicètre, or the Bastille" (RF 57) as an image of tyranny, not of monstrous insurgency; its inmates as desperate but impecunious gentlemen, not a barbaric multitude; the mob not as savagely passionate but as excitable in a moral way, feeling proper "pity" for the oppressed and proper "indignation" towards the obdurate (RF 178).[9]

The progressive thrust of *The Romance of the Forest*, then, is not particularly daring. What *is* unusual about the novel is its interest in what the sentimental regime does for or to women, in other words, in where sentimental manhood might leave a modern-day Lady Macbeth. On this score, *The Romance of the Forest* is torn. To adapt *Macbeth* to sentimentality, Radcliffe must leave Lady Macbeth out. In accordance with the ostensibly pro-feminine import of sentimentality, which refuses to privilege reason as the good, ethical, masculine pole of a reason/passion binary, *The Romance of the Forest* does not either demonize or anesthetize women.[10] More skeptical of sentimentality, Radcliffe's later fiction, by contrast, shows that the domination of women by men is not obviated by sentimentality but actually necessitated by it. Far less worried about the exigencies of sentimental ideology, *The Romance of the Forest* by contrast casts women as the softeners of male aggressivity, not as maelstroms of affectivity which must be mastered and contained.

Accordingly, *The Romance of the Forest* effects its social criticism by examining the way society either corrupts or preserves the "naturally" moralizing properties of male heterosexual feeling. If we attended to the case of Adeline alone, we might suppose sentimentality a good thing for women: it dignifies women's role as central to men and enables a degree of parity with them. Throughout *The Romance of the Forest*, Adeline is not only a palpitating provocation of the ethicosexual affectivity of men, as we have seen, but she is also an active moral agent in her own right. In stark contrast to Burney's excruciatingly punctilious heroines, Adeline doffs filial obligation as effortlessly as an old shawl when she finds her father heartless; she

musters "magnanimity" and self-command to "surmount . . . her fears" (RF 62) and explore the dangers on her own when she finds her protectors too fearful to face intruders; and when she finds herself at the mercy of a man determined to have his way with her, she simply jumps out the window and runs away, effecting her own rescue without fuss, eventually even lodging with a man to whom she is not married without the faintest blush of embarrassment. Indeed, even her "feminine" helplessness is described repeatedly as "energetic" (RF 6, 9, 21), as if it were not merely a condition but another instance of derring-do worthy of our respect.

Sentimentality here blurs gender in such a way as to enlarge Adeline's powers. Placed alongside men who are to be valued not especially for their self-command, or their valor, or their reason, but rather for their responsiveness to women, Adeline behaves like a pretty good man, at least when her "glowing charms" aren't in the way. Unmistakably "feminine" at some times and immasculated at others, Adeline is indeed an "equivocal being," and Radcliffe imagines this polymorphousness with some pleasure. Adeline and Theodore are tearful and valiant by turns: if men are roused to tenderness by the spectacle of Adeline's distress, the vision of Theodore's affliction in prison, which Adeline so graphically fantasizes, fires her moral and erotic affections in quite the same way.

But even as *The Romance of the Forest* in places imagines sentimentality opening out a free space for equivocal being, it elsewhere shows how other women are harrowed by heterosexual discipline. Far from inviting all women into the community of moral agents, sentimental heterosexuality excludes most of them so systematically that the only good woman represented here besides the exceptional Adeline is a dead woman. This doubleness is characteristic of sentimentality, for the masculinization of sentimentality is both a gesture of respect to women and an act of appropriation disabling them, their pleasure, and their fellowship with other women. Both possibilities are represented in *The Romance of the Forest*: the hopefulness of Adeline's example and the severity regarding other women's stand in blithe contradiction, for the novel concludes happily before any critique of its benevolence proceeds far.

The Romance of the Forest immediately announces its progressive, albeit misogynist allegiance by discrediting the cloister. The novel gets under way because Adeline refuses to submit to the "horrors of the monastic life" (RF 37). Adeline's first act of friendship upon settling into the abbey is to tell her confidante, Madame La Motte, how she resisted her father's command to take the veil. None of the "horrors" Adeline subsequently encounters—the nightmares, the persecutions, the abductions, the separations, the brushes with rape and murder—ever make her regret refusing the "horrors" she expected to encounter as a nun: the exclusion from "the cheerful intercourse

of society," from the "pleasant view of nature," and from "the delights of the world" on the one hand; and the condemnation to a life of "silence—rigid formality—abstinence and penance" (RF 37) on the other. The progressive program of the novel is visible in Adeline's assumption that she has a right to "nature" and sexuality, here seen as coextensive, and that her father does not have the authority to oblige her to forego "nature" to serve family interests. So fundamental is this right that it justifies the complete abrogation of an also natural, but inferior bond, articulated in unmistakably political terms: "Since he can forget . . . the affection of a parent, and condemn his child without remorse to wretchedness and despair—the bond of filial and parental duty no longer subsists between us—he has dissolved it, and I will yet struggle for liberty and life" (RF 37).

All sentimental literature is committed to the sociable affections, and as such hostile to the cloistered life as outside the sentimental economy. Radcliffe's interest in convents is nothing unusual. Eighteenth-century educational writing and fiction commonly address the religious, ethical, and educational efficacy of convent life. Mary Astell's *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies, for the Advancement of Their True and Greatest Interest* (1694) and Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall* (1762), for example, had advocated retired female communities to advance women's moral and intellectual development. And although later novels like *Rasselas* and *Mary, A Fiction* consider retirement and celibacy only to refuse them as a "choice of life," they at least acknowledge the attractions of the option. In *The Romance of the Forest,* however, the convent is accorded no such respect. The "ashes of some ancient monk" (RF 73) evoke condescending, but still kindly reflections on the monk's "mistaken" belief that the "Deity" prefers "abstinence and prayer" and "forbearance upon earth" to the "active virtues" of "benevolence" (RF 73), but the convent evokes dark fantasies about lesbian seduction. When bullying fails to move Adeline, the Lady Abbess, with "the distorted smile of cunning" (RF 37), tries to persuade her by painting the *sentimental* charms of the cloistered life "in the most beautiful tints of art," emphasizing "the rapturous delights of religion" and culminating with the "sweet reciprocal affection of the sisterhood" (RF 37). The Abbess's smiles only arouse Adeline's "disgust" (RF 37). The "lurking lines of cunning" may ensnare the "inexperienced," but Adeline is no fool. Unlike *The Italian, The Romance of the Forest* mentions the "sweet reciprocal affection of the sisterhood" only to dismiss it as claptrap. Adeline has seen too many nuns erupting with "the secret tear and bursting sigh of vain regret, the sullen pinings of discontent, and the mute anguish of despair" (RF 37) to believe it, and when she leaves, she "would have given half that world I prized so much . . . to have taken" the "poor nuns" out with her. The convent is a Bastille for women, spelling unnatural "imprisonment of the most dreadful kind" (RF 37).

Women's friendship follows the same path. After Madame La Motte hears Adeline's narration, she pledges the "tenderest pity to your misfortunes, and my affection to your goodness" (RF 39), and for a time the women appear united by a "tye of mutual friendship" (RF 44). But this pledge cannot be sustained. The sociable affections of sentimentality are only heterosexual ones, and relations between women are closed off, whether inside the convent or outside it. Madame La Motte, however, is not characterized by the misogyny that disfigures Radcliffe's other "other" women, such as Madame Montoni in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and the Marchesa in *The Italian*. When her husband's debts oblige the family to flee Paris, she is grieved not by the prospect of leaving the frippery of the capital, but by the prospect of parting from "her native place" and of leaving "her only son" (RF 2) without saying good-bye. The ruined abbey becomes a "domestic asylum, and a safe refuge from the storms of power" (RF 34) precisely because she too is susceptible to Adeline's distress, and to its power to reclaim a family that has been too much in the world: "Madame La Motte loved her as her child, and La Motte himself, though a man little susceptible of tenderness, could not be insensible to her solicitude. Whenever he relaxed from the sullenness of misery, it was at the influence of Adeline" (RF 34).

But male sentimentality lends itself to a sort of affective polygamy that subverts domesticity even as it idealizes it, and accordingly this "domestic asylum" turns dystopic fast. No sooner does she hear Adeline's story and pledge her eternal friendship than Madame La Motte attributes her husband's reserve to an illicit passion for Adeline. Thus the corrosiveness of heterosexual deprivation makes Madame La Motte as miserable in the ruined abbey as the "poor nuns" are in their cloister. Ardent pledges of friendship are made and then dropped. Adeline wins our approval when she sniffs, "though *she* [Madame La Motte] has abandoned *me*, I shall always love *her*" (RF 74). But in addition to being untrue—Adeline soon withdraws her esteem from Madame La Motte (RF 97)—the novel excludes the "love" Adeline describes. Professions of female friendship thus function ideologically as clichés, concealing contradictions in the heteroerotic monopoly on sociable affections.

Madame La Motte's suspicions of Adeline, of course, are groundless; her husband has grown sullen not because he is in the throes of adulterous passion but rather because he has robbed and attempted to murder a chevalier in the forest. But her apprehensiveness about the waywardness of men of feeling is so plausible that the novel must always discredit it. When La Motte comforts the helpless Adeline, the narrator steps in to assure us that "his sense of compassion was too sincere to be misunderstood" (RF 7). But this disclaimer functions much as Radcliffe's footnote about the pastness of the past. If it were not inevitable that "sincere" "compassion" be "misunderstood," no such assurance would be needed. Likewise, when Madame La

Motte finds Adeline's sweetness to her husband provocative, the narrator remarks that she mistook "the artless expressions of Adeline's gratitude and regard for those of warmer tenderness" (RF 71). Repeatedly convicting Madame La Motte of the "mistake" of confusing "effusions of gratitude" with "those of tenderness" (RF 57) only makes that "mistake" itself look more "natural."

Male sentimentality erodes the distinction between the sociable and the erotic, and Radcliffe's novels are canniest when showing conventional characters struggling with this anticonventional phenomenon. Take Adeline's reading of Louis La Motte's love for herself: "A mind more fraught with vanity than her's would have taught her long ago to regard the attentions of Louis, as the result of something more than well-bred gallantry" (RF 85). Seeming to impugn minds "fraught with vanity" and to applaud Adeline's purer soul, this passage upholds the wisdom of vain minds. Louis *does* mean "more": "Louis, by numberless little attentions, testified his growing affections for Adeline, who continued to treat them as passing civilities" (RF 85). Adeline's decision to read love as politeness imposes a distinction where none exists. Here, friendship is always heterosexual, and politeness always erotic. When Adeline escapes the Marquis's villa to find herself next to a strange man, he whispers, "Fear nothing, lovely Adeline . . . fear nothing: you are in the arms of a friend" (RF 167)—and the "friend" in this case speaks the truth, for he is none other than Adeline's beloved, Theodore.

Civility and heteroerotic interest *look* the same because they *are* the same. Madame La Motte's anxiety about her husband's attention to Adeline's charms is not unfounded, then, but just wrong. The fact that La Motte is unmoved when Adeline "hung upon [his] arm . . . and looked at him with a sort of hesitating interrogation" (RF 18) testifies not to the discreteness of erotic endearment and civility but rather to his unnatural chilliness. La Motte had earlier shaken off suspicions that a "friend" had betrayed him by reminding himself, "Such depravity . . . cannot surely exist in human nature" (RF 5). But his willingness to betray Adeline—who elicits interest stronger than friendship—shows the extent of his own denaturalization. Despite her "endeavours to interest his pity" (RF 120), he serves the Marquis's lust for Adeline in exchange for protection from the Marquis's anger with himself.

Under male sentimentality, pandering comes into articulation as a male crime as heinous as its asymmetrical female counterpart, prostitution. Where heteroerotic affection is seen as natural, pandering is unsexing. La Motte covers up his cowardice at home with machismo postures, resisting Adeline's appeals for pity by trying to act like a man, "struggling to assume a firmness, which his better feelings opposed" (RF 207). But this older tradition of manfulness, marked by "firmness" and an attempt to be above the solicitations of passion, is precisely what the novel, laboring under sentimentality, tries to discredit as *un*manly. Macbeth had erred by being too uxorious, but La

Motte is not uxorious enough.

Yet like the ruins which are "more awful in decay" (RF 15), an older tradition of masculinity haunts the novel and marks as womanish La Motte's readiness to put the "will of the Marquis" (RF 209) before the heteroerotic interests he should take in Adeline himself: "He now saw himself the pander of a villain, and the betrayer of an innocent girl, whom every plea of justice and humanity called upon him to protect. He contemplated his picture—he shrunk from it, but he could change its deformity only by an effort too nobly daring for a mind already effeminated by vice" (RF 208–9).Clearly, sentimentality disrupts as well as reaffirms gender. The masculinization of sentiment makes it a male virtue to succumb to passion, but it does not dispense with the need for gender differentiation. Yielding to pity makes La Motte a man of feeling, but effeminacy is still a degradation. La Motte has already unmanned himself when, the "tears swell[ing] into his eyes," he begs for pity: "I entreat—I supplicate of you a few moments of private discourse" (RF 89). Such is his feminization that his appeal moves the man he has assaulted: the Marquis is "softened by his distress" (RF 89). La Motte's masculinity is assailed in two ways at once: the pseudomachismo of his "firmness" and the failure of self-command—"I am not master of myself, or my conduct" (RF 207), he pleads—are both held up as unmanly.

The Romance of the Forest never presents the heteroerotic interest of virile men as a threat. Unlike *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* where Emily is disappointed in the man she does love, and harassed by the persistence of men she does not, this novel maintains that virile love is uncomplicated and wholesome. Louis La Motte's ardor, though unreciprocated, is benevolizing; and Theodore's passion renders him valiant. In *The Romance of the Forest,* it is the blockage of erotic endearment that causes problems, and the Marquis's sexual desire for Adeline is the only *un*depraved thing about him. The real measure of his corruption and that of the world which privileges him—the Marquis, after all, hobnobs with Louis XIV—is rather the ease with which he can buy men to denature themselves in his service.

Unlike other gothic scoundrels, Radcliffean villains are not vortices of formidably unbounded passion. The Marquis's villainy is marked by the elegance, not by the outlandishness, of his conduct. Burke's praise of the capacity of the old regime to beautify vice—under chivalry "vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness" (RRF 127)—roused Wollstonecraft's indignation and the *Vindications* assume the chasteness of heterosexual relations in their natural form. *The Romance of the Forest* shows its progressive political colors by imputing corruption to aristocratic manners. Consider how the Marquis is unmasked as a great swearer: "He cursed himself and her in terms of such coarseness and vehemence as La Motte was astonished to hear from a man whose *manners* were generally amiable, whatever might be the violence and criminality of his passions. To invent and express these terms

seemed to give him not only relief, but delight" (RF 238). The Marquis's elegance cannot, then, outweigh his grossness, and the discourse of rational self-control is pressed into service to emasculate the Marquis by presenting him as an intemperate man, "giving himself up, as usual, to the transports of passion" (RF 213).

In the Marquis, Radcliffe indicts the jaded masculinity of the courtly French male. Actuated by interest in Adeline's prostrate body, the Marquis's "condescension" and "politeness" to the family hiding on his abandoned property appears generous. But soon his urbanity poses a threat:

> The Marquis was polite, affable, and attentive: to manners the most easy and elegant, was added the last refinement of polished life. His conversation was lively, amusing, sometimes even witty; and discovered great knowledge of the world; or, what is often mistaken for it, an acquaintance with the higher circles, and with the topics of the day.
>
> Here La Motte was also qualified to converse with him. . . . Madame La Motte had not seen her husband so cheerful since they left Paris, and sometimes she could almost fancy she was there. (RF 99)

The ease with which the Marquis transforms a rotting abbey into the glittering capital spells trouble, for urbanity vitiates men's taste for the edifying pleasure of domesticity: La Motte is not interested in his wife, and the Marquis has abandoned his entirely. His villa is not the cradle of domestic affections, but a private bordello, peopled by sex dolls who, advancing and retiring at the wave of their master's hand, advance his seductions by reciting, automata-like, his praises to new initiates, and who are assisted by the labor of invisible musicians whose undulating strains promote his libertine designs.

But unlike Sadean marquises, whose villas are also pleasure factories, the Marquis de Montalt is within the reach of sentimental ideology. The power wielded by Sadean chevaliers, after all, is militantly antisentimental, exercised over people called victims as a political act.[11] The power exercised by sentimental gentlemen is incompatible with such frank insolence, for they regard their authority as unconflictual and caring, and themselves as so bound in solicitude to those they rule that the ruled share in the circulation of power. Moreover, while sex is the arena in which Sadean gentlemen stage their defiance of law, sex is what could restore Montalt to nature and to the law if he paid more attention. The Marquis cares about what Adeline thinks of him. He sees in her looks "the contempt which he was conscious he deserved" (RF 161), and thus shows himself a sentimental subject. Such a desire indicates that the Marquis acknowledges Adeline to possess some sort of power. When he offers her "protection" from her father in exchange for sexual favors, the "tears" that swell in her eyes and the "look, in which grief and indignation seemed to struggle for pre-eminence" (RF 122–23) impress

him despite himself: "For a moment, he was awed by the dignity of her manner, and he threw himself at her feet to implore forgiveness" (RF 123).

The fantasy figured in this quailing before Adeline's displeasure is that female beauty may be a species of the sublime. In Adeline, Radcliffe creates a sort of hybrid not allowed for in the gendered and mutually exclusive oppositions developed in Burke's *Enquiry*.[12] According to the orthodox Burkean position, the solicitude we feel for the frailty of beauty promotes sentiments of veneration, but not those of awe: "We submit to what we admire, but we love what submits to us."[13] But with respect to the Marquis, Adeline is not made dear by her submission to strength. Indeed, Adeline's beauty possesses the sublime property of "dignity"; she brings about the sublime affect of "awe," and the sublime effect of submission.

Feminine weakness in combination with the stronger stuff of the sublime stops the Marquis in his tracks. Trapped at his villa, and beset by his embraces, Adeline "awed him into forbearance" with a look expressive of "the dignity of virtue" but also "touched with sorrow" (RF 163). The Marquis became "conscious of a superiority, which he was ashamed to acknowledge, and endeavouring to despise the influence which he could not resist, he stood for a moment the slave of virtue, though the votary of vice" (RF 163). Confronted by Adeline's person, the Marquis forbears not out of a benevolizing sense of his power, but out of a sense of hers. Adeline's beauty thus mans and unmans him. He is emasculated in that his agency is suppressed. Like the "poor nuns" Adeline tells us about, he too becomes a "votary" who has worshiped at the wrong shrine and withheld himself from heterosexual virtue. But he is immasculated when he allows himself to be enslaved. At this stage of her career, Radcliffe uses sentimentality to make gender malleable.

What finally damns the Marquis is a homosocial crime. After he recaptures Adeline, the Marquis recognizes a seal belonging to his own family. Adeline turns out to be the woman he ordered to be murdered at the outset of the novel by an agent *posing* as her father. The Marquis long ago killed her real father in order to get his estate, and, informed of Adeline's decision to refuse the cloister in which she has dwelled since infancy, he seeks her death rather than risk the exposure of his crime. This is no time for sex. The Marquis changes course, enlisting La Motte's service to murder Adeline.

Under sentimentality, however, murdering a woman is so unnatural that the Marquis himself cannot order it. Instead, he speechifies about "man's" nature. "I will not affect to be more than a man, and trust me those who do are less" (RF 221), the Marquis declares, inverting Macbeth's lines. In the disquisition that follows, the Marquis applauds the untrammeled virility of natural "man." Against "prejudices" that cloud minds in "what is called a civilized country" the Marquis opposes "Nature, uncontaminated by false refinement." The Marquis explains that "the simple, uninformed American,"

the "Indian," the "wild Asiatic," the "Turk," and "[e]ven the polished Italian" are not troubled by "set notions, acquired in infancy, and cherished involuntarily by age," notions which corrupt the honorable "impulse of his heart." Without explicitly urging murder, the Marquis declares that "self-preservation is the great law of nature" (RF 222), and implies that it would be unnatural for La Motte to refuse to commit an act the Marquis cannot utter: "There are . . . people of minds so weak, as to shrink from acts they have been accustomed to hold wrong, however advantageous" (RF 222).

The Marquis's philosophizing deserves attention, because it shows Radcliffe's grafting the gothic onto the political. A striking departure from libertine tradition, the Marquis uses "reason" to seduce not a woman but a man, and the proposed crime is not sex, but a crime against sex. The argument itself, of course, is rife with problems, and La Motte, for his part, can't figure out what all this nonsense about nature, prejudice, and self-preservation has to do with ravishing Adeline, which he regards as the "natural" thing any "man" would want to do ("Why," La Motte asks, "should you wish the death of Adeline—of Adeline whom so lately you loved?" [RF 226]). It is hard to say whether the glitches in the Marquis's reasoning reflect a young author's failure to invent a subtle analysis of custom, her success at representing sophistry, or, finally, her ethically based refusal to endanger readers' minds by reproducing seductive "*reasoning*" (RF 222, emphasis La Motte's). Coming from the courtly Marquis, the argument is laughable: he does not want to cast off the contaminating refinements of privilege, but to maintain everything he has killed to get. Despite the Marquis's efforts to rouse La Motte into being man enough to do the deed, La Motte is too much of a man *not* to recoil: "La Motte shrunk aghast" and "He shrunk in terror" (RF 226). La Motte does not "shrink" from sexual misdemeanor. Though he does not relish treachery, he is not above a little cajolery between boys. Puzzled at the Marquis's sudden indifference to Adeline's person, La Motte taunts, "'Perhaps, my Lord,' said La Motte smiling, 'Adeline's obstinacy has been too powerful for your passion'" (RF 215). But once he realizes that murder is the Marquis's goal, La Motte cannot slay a girl, Duncan-like, in her sleep: "His heart melted with compassion for the distress he had already occasioned her" (226–27), and when Adeline awakes and begs "Have pity on me—I have no protector but you" (RF 231), her appeal to manful pity succeeds.

The world to which Adeline escapes is another asylum, a world set apart, beyond the reach of the Marquis, and inimical to the conditions which enfeeble men like La Motte and empower those like the Marquis. La Luc is related to La Motte and the Marquis by lines of difference which confirm his excellence as exemplary sentimental man. La Luc accounts for his presence when he takes "occasion to reprobate the conduct of those writers, who, by shew-

ing the dark side only of human nature, and by dwelling on the evils only which are incident to humanity, have sought to degrade man in his own eyes, and to make him discontented with life" (RF 269).

Like the Marquis, La Luc is a philosopher, but his target here are *philosophes* of the Marquis's ilk. In La Luc's words, I also detect Radcliffe's own sense of obligation not to show "the dark side only of human nature." Radcliffe's other novels present a few idealized fathers and father surrogates, but figuring as they chiefly do at the outset of the narratives, and even then only briefly, it does not fall to them, as it does to La Luc, to recuperate the concept of paternal authority itself, to represent the good side and refute the bad at some length. His function is purely ideological: he contributes in no material way to the resolution of Adeline's difficulties. Indeed, he is so isolated from the action of the foregoing narrative that he calls for a novel all to himself, an inset tale detached from everything else entitled "THE FAMILY OF LA LUC" (RF 244). He refutes by example as well as by precept—at times this part of the novel reads like a collection of his wit and wisdom—the errors that have benighted La Motte and the Marquis, and he assures readers who have been unnerved by the failures of sentiment elsewhere in the novel that somewhere, far away from the capitals of the world, true men of feeling thrive.

La Luc in his village is everything La Motte in his abbey and the Marquis in his villa are not. Unlike the Marquis's pleasure villa, Leloncourt is a "domestic asylum" animated by familial affection; but unlike La Motte's retreat, it provides a genuine haven for Adeline. Leloncourt is also unlike La Motte's ruined abbey in that it is exempt from the depredations of time, and this agelessness it shares with the Marquis's villa. The Marquis himself looks preternaturally youthful (RF 87), and Adeline remarks on the enchanting unreality of his dwelling: "The whole seemed the works of enchantment, and rather resembled the palace of a fairy than any thing of human conformation" (RF 156). Leloncourt village also appears to be outside change. As Peter remarks: "It looks just as it did twenty years ago; and there are the same old trees growing round our cottage yonder" (RF 241). But this is no false paradise: "Death," Peter observes, "spares nobody!" (RF 241), and La Luc grows alarmingly frail as the novel moves to a close. But Leloncourt is still a place of pleasure. Like the Marquis, La Luc preaches a "philosophy of nature," but his philosophy is "directed by common sense" (RF 245), and because his heart is "untainted with the vicious pleasures of society—pleasures that deaden its finest feelings and poison the source of its truest enjoyments" (RF 272), his satisfactions are more, not less, intense. Luxury has been the novel's principal vice. The benevolence La Luc preaches, Rousseauvean as well as native British in its provenance (note echoes of Fielding and Sterne in his strains), does not so much challenge luxury as repossess it. Having labored to "correct his feelings, not to annihilate them" (RF 277), La Luc

beats the Marquis at the pleasure game: "Could the voluptuary be once sensible of these feelings," La Luc explains in one of his maxims, he would never after forego "'the luxury of doing good'" (RF 246).

The benefits of La Luc's good feeling are not purely personal. Leloncourt is "an exception to the general character of the country, and to the usual effects of an arbitrary government; it [is] flourishing, healthy, and happy" (RF 240). And it is La Luc's own "activity and attention" (RF 240) that have brought about an extraordinary political coup, for his sentimental practice has transformed what would otherwise be a site of misery into an idyl of wholesomeness, and it has also synthesized the French and English national polities. The English, as M. Verneuil explains, have wise laws and conversation but are unhappy as a people—witness "the frequency of suicide among them" (RF 268)—while the French have "wretched policy" and "sparkling, but sophistical discourse," and yet enjoy a "gay animated air" (RF 269). But in La Luc's household and village "wisdom and happiness dwell together" (RF 277). La Luc effects this conjunction of wisdom, law, and pleasure by extending familial affections—the "chearfulness and harmony within the chateau"—to his neighbors, thereby nourishing the entire village with the new Macbethean milk of human kindness: "the philanthropy which, flowing from the heart of the pastor, was diffused through the whole village, and united the inhabitants in the sweet and firm bonds of social compact" (RF 277).

The powers of sentimental man stop just this side of apocalyptic. Recognizing that the here-below will always have its grief, Verneuil pronounces Leloncourt "almost a Paradise" (RF 277), distinguishing it from the Marquis's villa of artificial enchantment. La Luc can bring about as much of heaven as mortals are permitted to know—turning his village into a version of Parson Yorick's town of Abdera—because of heterosexual love. The prevailing attachment in La Luc's life, after all, is his wife. But what makes sentimental man's love of woman disturbing here is that La Luc's wife has been dead for more than twenty years, discernible only in the epitaph inscribed on the urn erected "IN TESTIMONY OF THE AFFECTION OF A HUSBAND" (RF 274) and in the effects she has upon that husband. She makes her husband's virtue and happiness possible, for her recollection is the well of sentiment from which he periodically draws to replenish feelings he then, in turn, dispenses nurse-like to his grateful world: "Often he retired to the deep solitude of the mountains, and . . . would brood over the remembrance of times past, and resign himself to the luxury of grief. On his return from these little excursions he was always more placid and contented. A sweet tranquillity, which arose almost to happiness, was diffused over his mind, and his manners were more than usually benevolent" (RF 246).

We have been asked to deplore the Marquis's need to sequester or, worse yet, to kill women: the continuance of his pleasures depends on getting

his wife and then Adeline out of the way. Yet the moral pleasures brought about by the very different sort of heterosexual love of La Luc are not much more benign for women, for they too seem predicated upon women's death. Indeed, to judge by the brutal ease with which Madame La Motte becomes de trop, shut out from the heteroerotic interests her son and husband each take in Adeline, the late Madame La Luc's influence is most efficacious only because she is absent.

Women are necessary to the production of morality, but that morality is not for them, and the moral pleasures that accrue to heterosexual affection turn out to be neither very natural nor very accommodating to them. The mortification endured by the "poor nuns" in the convent is nothing compared to what girls outside the convent endure as they are socialized into sentimentality in volume three of the novel. The discipline La Luc inflicts on Clara is as severe as the Abbess's, but while hers is to be sneered at as perverse and authoritarian, his is to be loved as wise and mild. The pedagogy practiced here, lifted with revision from Rousseau's *Emile,* differentiates the education of sons and daughters: Theodore is taught to be enviable as "a man" and as "a scholar" (RF 254), while Clara is permitted to draw and "taught to familiarize her mind to reasoning" (RF 276). The story chosen to illuminate La Luc's wisdom relates to her education. As Clara teaches herself how to play the lute he has given her, she becomes so absorbed in solitary enjoyment that she forgets her duties. Rather than reprimand her, La Luc encourages her to reflect on the villagers she ought to have tended while she selfishly indulged her musical pleasures: "This lute is my delight, and my torment!" (RF 250) she cries guiltily. And as if to make the masturbatory implications of this pleasure clearer, the narrator describes her inability to keep her resolution "not to touch her lute that day" (RF 251) as a failure to overcome the "temptation" (RF 252) of overpowering urges: "Clara repeated her favourite airs again and again. . . . She listened with increasing rapture to the tones as they languished over the waters and died away on the distant air. She was perfectly enchanted. "No! nothing was ever so delightful as to play on the lute beneath her acacias on the margin of the lake, by moonlight!" (RF 252).

La Luc too is given to withdrawing from the world in order to indulge in "the secret luxury" and "solitary enjoyment" of dwelling on "the idea of her he so faithfully loved" (RF 247), and because sentimental heterosexuality legitimizes male pleasure as moral, this satisfaction is dignified: when La Luc returns from solitary pleasure, his relief diffuses beneficence everywhere. But Clara's raptures must be arrested. When she recollects that yielding to pleasure may impair her power ever to restrain her inclinations, she brings the lute to her father and begs him to take it away until "she had taught her inclinations to submit to control" (RF 253). Swelling with gratification at his success, La Luc knows that the lute is now safe because Clara is no longer

inclined to use it as means to her own pleasure: "Take back the instrument," he insists. "I doubt not that you will be able to control its influence now that it is restored to you" (RF 253). The nunlike Clara wants "to complete the sacrifice she had begun" by refusing the lute, preferring the "exquisite sensations" of his approval to the "delights of music" she produced by herself. But La Luc does not allow Clara to renounce her instrument, for nunlike renunciation can become a pleasure of its own. Clara must take her lute back precisely to prove she does not love it.

The waywardness of women's pleasure must be broken, and their homoerotic and autoerotic tendencies extirpated in order to fix their desires within a heterosexual matrix whose authoritarian character is concealed. Clara's mortifying lessons in self-denial take place only because her father gave her the lute to begin with, it being "the happiness of La Luc to see his children happy" (RF 249). But the autonomous happiness of a daughter is a dangerous thing. Like the well-trained demoiselles at the Marquis's villa who have undergone regimens of their own before matriculating into their master's service, Clara learns to find her pleasure in her father's. We know that La Luc's scheme for molding his daughter into a exemplary woman has succeeded when he watches the tears well up in her eyes upon receiving his approval: "She had never resembled her mother so much as at this instant" (RF 253).

If, as we have seen, the domestic heterosexuality idealized in La Luc's home depends on the absence of the beloved woman as a subject, and on her training in submission, it still requires a woman's labor. La Luc's domestic circle may not include a wife and mother, but it evidently needs a woman who is more than a housekeeper. La Luc's house is run by his maiden sister, denominated exactly as his wife would be: Madame La Luc. She is made visible only to be ridiculed—for her vanity as a mistress of traditional cures (RF 248); for her "love of the marvellous" (RF 255), a weakness common to the minds of women and servants; and for her unrelenting prosiness.

But Madame La Luc is ridiculed most significantly for being a scold. *The Romance of the Forest* anticipates *Camilla* in representing the problematic distribution of power in sentimental households, where women bear the burden of instilling discipline, but have none of the authority to enforce it. When Clara hastens to prepare a place for Adeline in her father's home, Madame La Luc slaps her wrist: "Be patient, niece . . . there is no occasion for such haste: some things are to be considered first; but you are young and romantic" (RF 257). At this instance of his sister's conventionality, "La Luc smiled" (RF 257). But though he approves of his daughter's generosity, he does not overrule his sister's severity. We are thus asked to prefer the "tenderness of his heart" (RF 257) and to resent her as the disciplinarian. Likewise, when Clara's musical pleasures cause her to be remiss in her duties, it is Madame La Luc who "wished to reprove her" (RF 249) directly, only to be restrained by the kindly La Luc, whose discipline, as we have seen, is less

overt but far more extensive. The ideal sentimental household, then, must have and not have a mother. Because she is outside the sentimental mode, Madame La Luc does not vie with the attachment reserved for her brother. Maternal as well as paternal loyalties are thus reserved for him. Just as the enlargement of the domestic circle to accommodate Adeline bespoke La Motte's redeemability but spelled displacement for Madame La Motte, so too in the most exemplary of households, the female maternal figure is demoted. Sentimental masculinity may not be possible without its presence, but it is not possible with it either.

Against this backdrop, Adeline's anomalousness stands out in bold relief. The parallels between La Luc's household and the other households depicted here expose women's exclusion from the moral virtues they make possible under the sentimental dispensation. But Adeline's equivocal place in each of them helps us imagine the possibility that this need not be so. Adeline is different from Clara, sentimentality's conventional female. It is true that a "similarity of taste and character attached [Adeline] to Clara" (RF 259), but this "attachment" is of no moment whatsoever to Adeline. She is more La Luc's friend than Clara's: it is his "excellent library" (RF 259) and "his conversation" (RF 260) that console her. Indeed, if Leloncourt were not so well disciplined, La Luc's preference for Adeline might easily provoke Clara's jealousy and thus recapitulate the domestic strife that marred the Abbey. While Clara is encouraged to add a "modest and judicious remark" to conversation only insofar as she can convince her hearers that "the love of knowledge, not the vanity of talking, induced her to converse" (RF 276), Adeline's abilities are not circumscribed by female propriety. Just as her earlier display of "self-love" (RF 82) assumed her entitlement to the ethical dignity of subjecthood, so does her intellectual energy, particularly as it relates to her mastery of language, disrupt customary expectations about women. The pleasure La Luc takes in her conversation exceeds anything he gets from his daughter: "That love of rational conversation . . . opened to him a new source of amusement in the cultivation of a mind eager for knowledge, and, susceptible of all the energies of genius" (RF 260). And while Clara warbles tunes while strumming her lute (with his permission), Adeline has actual ideas about language—particularly about the sublimity of English—and dilates the third volume with poetry of her own composition.

La Luc may announce that Adeline and Clara "shall be equally my daughters" (RF 259), but they are not equally daughterly. Radcliffe's prose blurs gendered categories when describing what Verneuil sees in her: "all the charms of elegance and grace, with a genius deserving of the highest culture" (RF 277). Adeline's signifiers—"elegance and grace"—are equivocally gendered. Louis La Motte is first described as "graceful" (RF 68), and Theodore is marked by "elegance" (RF 87). Moreover, the hyperbole of "genius deserving of the highest culture," suggests that "genius" is verging on the

protoromantic sense of the term, and thus immasculates her further. In short, when Theodore, under a sentence of death, commends Adeline to La Luc with the words "she will more than supply the loss of your son" (RF 327), he is righter than he knows: sentimentality has conferred upon Adeline uniquely the status of son and daughter alike.

Having represented the good man of feeling as able by the love of woman to create a small-scale republic of virtue, and as ready to honor a sentimental woman, even though his regime could not have brought her into being, Radcliffe does not conclude the novel with him. La Luc's nonrelation to the "world" is the condition of his success, and he does not get the novel out of the quandary in which it has rested ever since Adeline's escape from the Marquis, and the Marquis's consequent vengeful prosecution of La Motte (for robbery and attempted murder) and of Theodore (for insubordination to his commanding officer, the Marquis himself, in Adeline's defense). Finally, it is the public world of lawsuits and monarchy, the world the Marquis has so successfully manipulated, the world from which the virtuous men like La Luc retire, that punishes the wicked and rewards the just. As in *The Mysteries of Udolpho, The Romance of the Forest* waits until the final chapters before disclosing crucial information, and generates all manner of complicating surplus before settling into felicity. Here again closure establishes what the foregoing material has consistently denied: the moral priority of homosocial relations. Finally, the "unnatural" crime from which everyone recoils in horror is not the plan to abduct, rape, or kill a woman. Such intentions are overshadowed, and their moral import stripped to relative insignificance in face of a far heavier crime—fratricide: "The passions which had tempted him to the commission of a crime so horrid as that of murder—and what, if possible, heightened its atrocity, the murder of one connected with him by the ties of blood, and by habits of even infantine association—the passions which had stimulated him to so monstrous a deed were ambition, and the love of pleasure" (RF 342).

The Romance of the Forest reverses itself, reabsorbing the presentimental ethos of *Macbeth* after all. The Marquis's crime is homosocial, a transgression against the "natural" laws not of heteroerotic endearment, but against the hierarchical principles underwritten by the practice of primogeniture. To be sure, feeling is not irrelevant. His indifference to "infantine association" makes his crime more atrocious. But it is insubordination, not indifference per se, that constitutes his crime. If moral order is produced not by the mollifying influence of women upon men, but rather by the containment of male ambition through submission to other male authorities, then the plot starts to unravel, as the narrator admits: "His brother and his infant daughter only stood between him and his wishes; how he removed the father has been already related; why he did not employ the same means to secure

the child, seems somewhat surprising" (RF 343).

The return of *The Romance of the Forest* to the rule of law over pleasure pushes far into the background La Luc's sentimental, (almost) paradisal world, where law and desire—for men, if not for women—never conflict. Curiously enough, however, *The Romance of the Forest* does not reaffirm this priority by idealizing the law. The happy outcome hinges on the most infamous prerogative of authoritarian regimes: d'Aunoy confesses the crimes he committed at the Marquis's bidding not because the solemnity of the courts of law awe him into truthfulness, but rather because the law recognizes the legality of confessions extorted by "torture" (RF 341). A similar doubleness informs Radcliffe's treatment of the two petitions entertained by the King of France. Utterly feminized by this point, La Luc throws himself at the king's feet, implores pardon for his sentenced son silently with his eyes, and promptly faints away. The King of France, evidently a man of feeling himself, is "interested" enough in the "singular distress" (RF 324) of the "unhappy father" (RF 320) that he actually reads the petition. But because he is also a friend of the Marquis, with whom he consults, he is convinced that Theodore deserves no pardon. Sentiment, in other words, does not get a chance to work in the courts of Europe: the influence of suave courtiers is too entrenched.

The Romance of the Forest is Harriet Smith's favored reading in *Emma*. It is tempting to view the preference by a character of so little discrimination as a judgment on Austen's part. *Northanger Abbey*'s Catherine Morland, a shrewder reader by far, prefers the darker *Udolpho*. *The Romance of the Forest* smooths over the same difficulties it uncovers, moving in two contradictory directions at once. First, and most conventionally, it follows the vaguely progressive political critique lodged by the precept and example of La Luc's sentimentality. In opposition to the ways of the courtly, homosocial world, where men clamor after the false pleasures of wealth and title, La Luc brings about the reign of love and virtue through the benevolizing practice of heteroerotic love. Second, and more stunningly, *The Romance of the Forest* engages in a sexual critique of heteroerotic sentimentality itself, exposing how it reproduces in mystified form the same hierarchical arrangements with respect to women that it pretends to erase, rendering women the occasions of men's moral feeling, but not the subjects of their own. Both critiques are dropped at the denouement: the bad, unfeeling father is replaced by a good, tender father, the unnatural Marquis replaced by a natural Marquis; the courtly aristocratic ethos excoriated everywhere else is permitted to stand as politically, juridically, and even sentimentally viable; and the world, depicted throughout as depraved and depraving, is reaffirmed as morally effectual, and as interested in the vindication and the enrichment of the virtuous.

No wonder Harriet Smith likes *The Romance of the Forest*. Adopting

fairy-tale protocols with little resistance, it does not upset her simplicity. But the frictionlessness of *The Romance of the Forest* may be the privilege of its novel's historical moment. *The Romance of the Forest* was written before the execution of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette, before the revolutionaries declared war, before it was impossible *not* to imagine crisis. The retreat from critique here may not, then, reflect a failure of imagination so much as a particularly hopeful effort of it. New-found aristocratic relations honor rather than censure the contempt Adeline expresses for the "splendour of false happiness" (RF 362) when she marries the poor Theodore and withdraws to Leloncourt; anomalously augmented by sentimentality itself, she is morally dignified by her domesticity, and enabled like La Luc to "diffuse" the affections originating in heterosexual love "to all who [come] within the sphere of their influence" (RF 363). Radcliffe's later novels would dismantle the political and sexual problematics of sentimental masculinity. *The Romance of the Forest* averts conflict. It shows that many of the guardians to whom Adeline is entrusted are less than men, but it allows Adeline at least to be more than a woman as well.

The Sex of Suffering: The Mysteries of Udolpho

Like most gothic heroines, Emily St. Aubert has more than her share of trouble. Orphaned and friendless, she makes her way through France and Italy and back again assailed by the restless anguish of the dead and, even worse, by the restless cruelty of the living. Among all Emily's trials, however, there is one so dreadful that we must wait until the final pages of a very long novel to know exactly what it is. This extraordinary delay testifies to the exceptional horror of what Emily has beheld. Unlike us, Emily is in no suspense. She has had a good look at an unspeakable something, and it has shocked her out of consciousness and into a heroic silence she never breaks. Finally it is the narrator who tells us what Emily has seen couched within a deep recess of a wall and concealed behind a black veil: a putrescent corpse, its face pale and devastated by decay, its features and hands crawling with worms. Despite its disfigurement, Emily immediately knows this to be the body of the late owner of Udolpho, the unfortunate and much-storied Signora Laurentini, who had been first courted and then murdered by Montoni.

After Emily's horror abates, many factors prompt her "to arm herself with resolution to observe a profound silence" (MU 249) concerning what she has seen. A fear of Montoni makes concealment a safe choice: surely a man capable of murdering a woman and leaving her corpse lying around the house for eighteen years might do more if provoked. But Emily remains silent long after Montoni ceases to be a menace. Clearly, not only fear but discretion dictates her silence. In pointed contrast both to other women of the upper classes, who are always whining about their injuries, and to servants, who are always telling "stories" about them, Emily is a woman of few words: the secrets of a man's household are safe with her. She never violates that decorum which forbids a good woman from detailing her hardships. She tells her sweetheart what has happened to her in Italy only, we are assured, "[a]t his request" (MU 502), and she takes care that Montoni's guilt is

"rather softened, than exaggerated, by her representation" (MU 502), omitting her surmises about Laurentini altogether.

But we reach the final pages of the novel only to be informed that Emily's "profound silence" has been for nothing. What Emily *really* saw was not Laurentini's body, but rather "a waxen image made to resemble a human body in the state, to which it is reduced after death" (MU 662) and placed in the recess where Emily saw it generations before the novel begins. This figure had been designed by the "Romish Church" specifically for the edification of a marquis of yore, who, having transgressed against Church prerogative, was made to look at the waxen effigy of himself several hours each day in order to obtain pardon for his sins by meditating upon "the condition at which he must himself arrive" (MU 662). Though the deadpan narrator describes the revised "history" of the body behind the black veil as "somewhat extraordinary" (MU 662), it remains the most outrageous instance of what readers love to ridicule about Radcliffe, her tendency to dispel the fantastic by attributing mysterious phenomena to innocuous causes—causes which, despite their rational acceptability, appear at least as far-fetched as the irrational explanations her characters had earlier entertained.

But in our haste to protest the sleight-of-hand whereby a human body fallen to murderous greed is replaced by a waxen figure crafted with piety, we have overlooked another, more pervasive, and, I would contend, more troubling gesture whereby a woman's body has been replaced with a man's. This is not the only time Emily mistakes the sex of a suffering body. Once convinced that Laurentini is decomposing in a room down the corridor, she is ready to suspect that the mysterious "tall figure" (MU 384) haunting the halls is Laurentini's ghost, only later to learn that the figure is a very male, very-much-alive assassin hiding out at the castle. Later still, Emily comes upon another recess concealed behind another veil, and there she discovers yet another corpse, whose features, "deformed by death, were ghastly and horrible, and more than one livid wound appeared in the face" (MU 348). Emily looks carefully: "Bending over the body," she "gaze[s], for a moment, with an eager, frenzied eye" (MU 348), and although she soon faints in horror, she is certain that she has recognized the body of her persecuted aunt, Madame Montoni. The inference is hardly implausible—the whole household has witnessed Montoni's attempts to coerce Madame Montoni into signing over her property. Yet once again Emily's inference is reversed: "The spectacle . . . was the corpse of a man" (MU 365) killed in a fray among the desperadoes boarding at Udolpho.

I open this chapter with a description of the corpse switch because, far from being an isolated or purely conclusory affair, it underscores in ludicrously graphic terms a problem with sexual recognizability and a competition over the site of legitimate suffering basic to the entire novel: time and time again,

icons of suffering womanhood have turned out "really" to have depicted men. What is distinctive about the ending of the novel is thus not the fact that its eleventh-hour enlistment of rational explanation is bathetic; "retrospective trivialization," as Michelle Massé has put it, is par for the gothic course.[1] What *is* distinctive is the boldness with which it dramatizes the necessity of establishing the priority of male suffering and the presumption of female pathology: men, in other words, are the ones who really suffer, and to perceive that women suffer is to be imagining things.[2] At the same time, however, the extravagance of the corpse switch unsettles the closure it is supposed to bring, inviting us by its very clumsiness to mark its incoherence and to ask why this confusion must occur in the first place. Why is it that, even though characters are ranked according to their manly excellence or their feminine worth, gender is so equivocal that bodies are hard to identify and even when Emily looks closely—as at the supposed corpse of her own aunt—she cannot tell the difference?

Gender is the central mystery of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) because sentimentality has disrupted the way the affective lives of the sexes are marked. We have already seen how the masculinization of sentiment worried Wollstonecraft. Having tried to open moral rationalism out to women in the liberal hope that manly virtue need not be restricted to male bodies, she is indignant to find men acting like women and women acting like children. But male sentimentality leaves a different legacy to Radcliffe. True, in *The Romance of the Forest,* Radcliffe uses sentimentality to equalize the sexes. But as the reaction wears on, the obligation to honor figureheads of authority is more intensely felt. In her later novels, accordingly, legitimate sensitivity is so exclusively the prerogative of men that female affectivity is denounced, and the formerly male virtues of self-command and steadiness are required of every good girl. Radcliffe's heroines must thus be paragons of passive feminine virtue as well as exemplars of an older-styled masculinity. This accession to rational self-restraint, however, is grueling rather than empowering, since it denies them access to their own stories. Emily's visions of suffering womanhood remain "unspeakable" because they cannot be articulated within the discourse of male sentimentality, where men occupy the site of legitimate suffering, even when they seem to be feeling sorry for women. The "mysteries" narrated in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*—the many stories about dying, murdered, abandoned, and otherwise wronged women which Emily hears, imagines, and exemplifies—are presented finally *not* as cumulative evidence of male oppression, but as misrecognitions borne of excess of the wrong, pathological, female sort, and accordingly are demoted to "superstitious" tales (the adjective is always a pejorative in Radcliffe) believed only by credulous servants, paranoid maidens, and (for a time) spellbound readers. Emily may have the satisfaction of saying "For heaven's sake be reasonable—be composed" (MU 516) to her hero while he sobs "My for-

titude is gone" (MU 517), or of being the strong one when her father's weakness makes him a fitter object of chivalry than herself (MU 33). But such satisfaction comes at the price of disavowing her story. Wollstonecraft complains about the wrongs of women. Living in a novel which stages, first, the compulsion to repeat the scene of male to female violence; second, the complaint about that violence; and third, the displacement of rage about the violence onto rage about the complaint, Radcliffe's wronged heroine here is finally obliged to deny that there have been any wrongs at all.

Though sensitivity is the prerogative of men in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, it is not the only prerogative of men. If the novel is animated by a man of feeling (St. Aubert), it is also haunted by a man of none (Montoni). As such, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* dramatizes the polarization within masculinity characteristic of the 1790s. Anxious about the crisis in masculine self-definition brought about by the passing of the "age of chivalry," Burke had defined chivalry historically as a "mixed system of opinion and sentiment" (RRF 127) constitutive, as J. G. A. Pocock has shown, of the essential *modernity* of the (misnamed) old regime, distinguishing it from the routinely cruel "states of Asia, and possibly from those states which flourished in the most brilliant periods of the antique world" (RRF 127).[3] In the Italian sections of this novel, Radcliffe conjures not the specific interests or agendas of French revolutionaries, but rather the standard of masculinity Burke considered typical of them, a standard in which ferocity is *un*mitigated by chivalry, and *un*mollified by that gallantry towards rank and sex that were supposed crucial to civilized life.

Like Walpole's before it, then, Radcliffe's gothic is a fantasy about presentimental manhood, the type of manhood that prevailed *before* the dispositions of lords were softened by elegances of delicacy; *before* nationally deployed sentiments of veneration and shame could be counted on to inhibit men from feeling, much less from saying, as Manfred does in *The Castle of Otranto*, "I am no more to be moved by the whining of priests, than by the shrieks of women";[4] *before* the newspapers, roads, and voluntary spies to which Henry Tilney refers in *Northanger Abbey* could lay private crimes before a community whose disapproval any decent, feeling man would fear. Although set in 1584, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* is pervasively absorbed in the crisis of its present. Generally regarded as sloppy in her use of history, Radcliffe actually gathered history into her fiction with great care. She reached far back to the hypermachismo of the *condottieri* in order to represent a historically actual, as opposed to purely imaginary, version of masculinity *un*encumbered by sentimental inhibitions of any sort without evoking the French Revolution in its particularity. It is the very anachronism of the novel, sometimes regarded as evidence of authorial fatuity, that enables Radcliffe to juxtapose "modern" sentimental man with his affectively untrammeled avatar. Montoni's warlike virility brings the maneuvers

of sentimental masculinity into clear focus. And his status as a historical type obliges us to consider how the tension in the novel is not between women and men, but between men and men, the former standing in for and deflecting attention away from the latter. The resexing of suffering from female to male entails a related resexing of guilt from male to female which reinforces our loyalty to paternal culture, and assuages our nervousness about violence to women by (re)figuring it as deserved. But the conclusion, as I have already hinted, actually refuses completely to do this ideological work, and cries out for its own deconstruction.[5] As Linda Colley has shown, the civil war in France, with all the gruesomeness of its touted violence against women, prompted English women to think about their own safety at home, but the comparison between their lot and those of their sisters in France was not always reassuring.[6] Indeed, between the strenuous female decorum enjoined by St. Aubert's sentimentality and the brutal silencing of female protest compelled by Montoni's authority, Emily has little to choose: both maneuvers erase female subjectivity.

The Mysteries of Udolpho opens with a quotation from Thomson celebrating "home," the haven of love and contentment, where everyone is "supporting and supported" and where "polished friends/ And dear relations" alike "mingle into bliss" (MU 1). If the first textual act of the novel is to evoke the perfect nurturance of Emily's home, La Vallée, the next is to unsettle it by evoking the ghost of Hamlet's father to describe Emily's father, the architect of this bliss: disgusted with the depravity of the city, St. Aubert retires "'more in *pity* than in anger'" (MU 1, emphasis Radcliffe's) to the world of nature and domesticity. In a straightforward way, this allusion describes the mood of St. Aubert's withdrawal to a happy valley, and alerts us to his paternal excellence. But the allusion also bears upon the text in more complex ways. First, as Emily has no way of knowing, it hints that something is rotten in the garden of La Vallée, and points to the hidden cause of St. Aubert's mysterious grief: his sister's unpunished murder by poison. Second, it presents St. Aubert's disablement sympathetically, describing not only his *future* status—he will soon die and haunt his stricken daughter with ghostly appearances—but also and more peculiarly, his *present* condition as one, in a sense, already dead. Like the ghost of Hamlet's father, he cannot possibly right the wrong that grieves him, and it would be silly to fault him for ineffectuality. St. Aubert is remarkable for insufficiency: he cannot prosecute his sister's murder, he cannot keep possession of his paternal estate, he cannot persuade the current owner to forego vulgar landscape "improvements," he cannot manage his affairs, and he cannot control his tears. In all this, however, St. Aubert's prestige is enhanced, for the link with the ghost of Hamlet's father allows him to be "feminated" (to recall the term in *The Romance of the Forest*)—to be unable to initiate ethical action—without

inviting any of the opprobrium that typically attaches to the term.

There is more. The allusion reflects on Emily as well as on her father. Because it inculpates St. Aubert's murdered sister by associating her with Gertrude's womanly birthright, moral frailty, it also implicates this sister as not merely the occasion but also the cause of St. Aubert's grief. Unlike the ghost of Hamlet's father, himself the victim of murder, St. Aubert laments the murder of someone else in such a way as to occupy the position of griever and victim alike. As we shall see, this move is paradigmatic in a novel which forbids women to complain, as ghosts do (this being what ghosts are for), about their own murders, and which instead aggravates the wrongs of men in order to magnify their sensitivity. But while the allusion places Emily alongside women as aggrievers of wronged men, it also paradoxically assigns her to Hamlet's role as a princely avenger. Throughout the novel, Emily will be haunted by family crimes. Through her uncalculated mediation, moreover, crimes are brought to light, and even though she uncovers enough about her paternal birthright to make us wonder whether it is worth redeeming, the novel recuperates it with (so to speak) a vengeance: Emily's crowning act is to recover the paternal estates her father and forefathers had lost. Macbeth, as we have seen, could not make transition to sensibility without profound transformation; but Hamlet adapted more readily. Radcliffe's enthusiasm for a female Hamlet—she preferred Mrs. Siddons to Kemble in the part—suggests an awareness that Hamlet's example could be momentous for heroines.[7] If aggressive effectuality is not what constitutes being heroic, if the best of heroes is effectual only by accident, if lack could be the sign of power, and if insufficiency in ethical resolution is not marked as failure, but rather testifies to a sensitivity superior to unreflective martial daring, *then* the heroic can be open to women too on the same terms.

The logic of male sentimentality, however, forbids this possibility, and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* shuts it down at every turn. Emily's father, unlike Hamlet's, never tells her about the crime that haunts him, never directs her to set it down on her "tables," never enjoins her to make it right. Instead he orders her to destroy the family papers without reading them, and Emily obeys, remaining by his wish ignorant until the end. St. Aubert's educational program for her is thus designed to keep Hamlet-like sensitivity on his side of the gender line. Noting her susceptibility, he invigorates her character. In this, St. Aubert's educational project differs quite markedly from that of La Luc, that officious educator in *The Romance of the Forest.* La Luc never raises his daughter's sights above the passion that suffuses woman's nature. He thwarts her desires only to teach her to submit them to *his* control. St. Aubert, by contrast, gives Emily a somewhat classical education—teaching her "Latin and English, chiefly that she might understand the sublimity of their best poets" (MU 6)—and he trains her in independence and rational self-control. He endeavors "to strengthen [Emily's] mind" to resist "the first

impulses of her feelings," to engage in the "cool examination" of disappointments, and "to acquire that steady dignity of mind, that can alone . . . bear us, as far as is compatible with our nature, above the reach of circumstances" (MU 5). Emily's is *not* a sentimental education. Her function instead is, as Gary Kelly has put it, "to be a field of disciplined subjectivity."[8]

St. Aubert is not obliged to exemplify the fortitude required of his daughter. The paragraph that describes his efforts to "enure her to habits of self-command" also discloses his softness and susceptibility. Though he tries, for example, to bear the death of his sons "with philosophy, he had, in truth, no philosophy that could render him calm to such losses" (MU 5). Like many "good" men in eighteenth-century fiction who preach stoic self-possession only to fall apart upon the deaths (real or imagined) of their children—Parson Adams in *Joseph Andrews* or the stoic in *Rasselas*—St. Aubert cannot attain the "philosophy" he recommends, and this inability is hardly satirized. It is to his credit, as to theirs, that he is too tender to be above pain. Not satisfied with making this point once, Radcliffe repeats this material when describing Madame St. Aubert's death. She bears her illness with "patient suffering, and subjected wishes" (MU 19), but St. Aubert is "not philosopher enough to restrain his feelings" (MU 18). Emily watches as tears well in his eyes, but she is not exempt from "the duty of self-command." He declares that "all excess is vicious; even that sorrow, which is amiable in its origin," and he admonishes, "Your sorrow is useless. . . . Let reason *therefore* restrain sorrow" (MU 20).

In this reiteration of St. Aubert's affective overflow followed by paternal prohibitions of the same in his daughter, I detect none of the irony one might find in a novel, say, by Austen. We may be enabled to critique this recurrent discrepancy, but we are not encouraged to do so. When Emily spies St. Aubert sobbing aloud (MU 26), it does not occur to her, as it might to Catherine Morland, to observe that St. Aubert does not "practise [sic] what I advise" (MU 21)—she does not expect him to—and she only feels "curiosity" and "tenderness" about distress. In insisting on the respect due to St. Aubert's sensitivity, the text exposes some of the deadly implications of male sentimentality. True, behaviors traditionally coded as feminine are now culturally valued, but women themselves do not share in the prestige. Good women only function as signifiers of male sensitivity, and this they accomplish somewhat better dead. Madame La Luc, as we have seen, only appears as monument to her husband's tenderness. Madame St. Aubert, accorded marginally more space, is brought into the first chapter of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* only so that she may die, and by dying give place to her tender husband, venerated as a nurturer as well as lawgiver. Emily, for her part, is trained in a mode of self-command once marked "manly" because she is superfluous. Female sensitivity is oversensitivity. Indeed, where the word "sentimental" itself appears, it is associated with culpable femininity, as in

the "excessive refinement" of the Venetian ladies, and worse, the self-indulgence of the Countess de Villefort. When this lady reclines on the sofa, casts her "languid eyes" over the "*horrid*" Pyrenees, indulges the "luxuries of ennui," and listens to "a sentimental novel, on some fashionable system of philosophy," we are being told that she is depraved. "The Countess was herself somewhat of a *philosopher*, especially as to *infidelity*, and among a certain circle her opinions were waited for with impatience, and received as doctrines" (MU 476). The word "infidelity" links female feeling—as opposed to the manly sentiment of her good aggrieved husband—to waywardness of the worst sort. Exemplifying the impiety which antijacobin writers associated with radicals, and the decadence which radicals like Wollstonecraft herself associated with aristocratic culture, the characterization of the countess indicates the embattled status of female sentimentality during the 1790s.[9]

In the past, critics have assumed that St. Aubert is the nonproblematic moral center of the novel, and accordingly they second him in scolding Emily for letting herself get carried away.[10] But St. Aubert's interdiction on ungoverned feeling, uttered through his own copiously welling sobs, is also echoed by Madame Cheron/Montoni and Montoni, hardly moral authorities. Accepting, rather than interrogating, the imperative for the anesthetization of Emily entails passing over the tension that describes Emily's entire career as a heroine. On the one hand the plot of *Udolpho* multiplies instances of the injuries done to women and, by inviting us to sympathize with their distress, allows that their suffering enhances the moral respect due to them. Yet on the other, in compliance with the dominant discourse of male sentimentality that underwrites St. Aubert's advice as well as the conclusion, the plot denies that these women are being injured in the first place, and figures their sensitivity as culpable, our sympathy as misplaced, the novel as misread.

The farther Emily journeys from La Vallée, the more conspicuous the violence exacted upon women, and the more difficult it becomes to discredit their suffering as imaginary. Even at La Vallée, traces of such violence are discernible. Madame St. Aubert dies from an infection she catches while nursing St. Aubert, and his recovery progresses in tandem with her deterioration: "As he advanced towards health, Madame seemed to decline" (MU 8). Moreover, when Emily finds him weeping over the portrait of another woman, we infer that Madame St. Aubert is not her husband's beloved. As Emily travels, the plot entraps her into suspecting her father's fidelity, and Madame St. Aubert takes on the status of a wronged woman. Under the reassuring influence of sentimental masculinity in France (where even peasants are adept at the art of delicate compliment), however, Emily can scarcely imagine her suspicions. Where gallant men are more tender than women, such things cannot be. But in Italy Emily is under the care of Montoni's ferocious masculinity, sexual polarities are pronounced and power is flaunted,

stories about injured women abound, and shrews like Madame Cheron/Montoni receive the domestic violence they've got coming to them. In Montoni's household, for example, a servant can observe, "I suppose the Signor has been beating my lady" (MU 306) as if wife-beating were commonplace. Montoni's manliness and his refusal to brook anything feminine are connected. From our first meeting—when he is called "uncommonly handsome," with "features manly and expressive, but whose countenance exhibited . . . haughtiness of command" (MU 23)—Montoni is marked as possessing an aggressive masculinity that contrasts pointedly with that of St. Aubert and Valancourt in being not only distinct from but also hostile to women, whom he regards only as a means to or form of disposable property.

Although the sentiment of female characters is always curtailed or incriminated in France, the subject of gender never arises there, as if sentimentality made gender too nebulous a subject to be broached directly. In Italy, by contrast, Montoni is always talking about what is and is not manly, about feminine wiles and vices.[11] Montoni is unique among gothic villains, and his singularity is owing to the role he plays in Radcliffe's drama of gender. Unlike Manfred, Ambrosio, or Rochester, Montoni is not a creature of high passion; *that* might place him on the sentimental side of the masculine spectrum. Two contradictory imperatives pull at his characterization: as a gothic villain, he must be cruel, but as an exemplar of nonsentimental manhood, he must champion the values of reason and moderation. The manliness he espouses partakes of an older, classical tradition of masculinity which represents emotionality as a deviation from rational self-control, as feminine and shameful. Not surprisingly, Montoni is harsh on the "whims" (MU 244), the "wiles" (MU 199), the "capricious[ness]" (MU 214) of women. To him, femininity is a natural but regrettable excess that must be reined in; thus his utterly conventional lecture to Emily on female comportment—"You should learn and practise [sic] the virtues, which are indispensable to a woman—sincerity, uniformity of conduct and obedience" (MU 270)—stresses the duty of submission to paternal regulations.

Montoni's imprecations against sentimental men follow along the same axis. Like Burke's heartless insurgents, Montoni has no truck with the "pleasing illusions" of gallantry. For him, as Burke bitterly put it, "All homage paid to the sex in general as such, and without distinct views, is to be regarded as romance and folly" (RRF 128). Exasperated by Count Morano's unwillingness to use force on Emily, Montoni ridicules uxoriousness: "This submission [to Emily] is childish!—speak as becomes a man, not as the slave of a petty tyrant" (MU 200). For Montoni, chivalric love is emasculating, inverting the hierarchy that dictates the submission of women to men, and obscuring a man's "discernment" (MU 201). He dismisses Morano's hotheaded gallantry as deficient in maleness, "the conduct of a passionate boy" deserving of his "contempt" (MU 201), much as he ridicules the impetuous-

ness of a cohort by declaring, "This is the conduct of a boy . . . not of a man: be more moderate in your speech" (MU 363). Later, he foils Morano's attempt to rescue (or abduct) Emily because his "superior skill" and "temperance" give him the edge over Morano's "fury" (MU 266–67). These persistent signifiers of temperance remind us that the rationale of Montoni's characterization is to provide us with a measure of the relative effeminacy of male sentimentality, not just with a villain generally speaking.

One of the most problematic ironies of *Udolpho* is that Emily's training in self-control favorably disposes her towards Montoni. Whereas Adeline in *The Romance of the Forest* and Ellena in *The Italian* esteem villains only because they are ignorant about them, Emily is spellbound by Montoni's masculine mystique. Her admiration for his "Italian cap of scarlet cloth," his commanding "military plume" (contrasting as it does with Cavigni's paltry "feather"), and the "high chivalric air of his figure" (MU 172) suggests a sensory appreciation for an older tradition of virile display which makes good guys look drab. Having been tutored in Latin in order to appreciate the "sublimity" of Roman poets, Emily is inspired by Montoni's debate with Cavigni about "Hannibal's passage over the Alps" to compose her own vision about his "indefatigable march," the "gleam of arms," the "glitter of spears and helmets," the "blast of a distant trumpet," and the "soldiers and elephants tumbling headlong down the lower precipices" (MU 166). Like the quasiheroic verses Emily writes elsewhere, this fantasy bespeaks a responsiveness to the grandeur Montoni purveys, for she never beholds Montoni without marking the sublimity of his maleness, "the fire and keenness of his eye, its proud exultation, its bold fierceness, its sullen watchfulness" (MU 157). More than a taste for the sublime is at issue here, rather an affinity for a lost masculinity encoded by sublimity itself and fostered by Emily's manly education.[12]

Emily's concord with Montoni is problematic because it implies both ambivalence about the sentimentality of St. Aubert or that of Valancourt and a fearful attraction to the very qualities that make Montoni so forthrightly misogynist. To her mind, Montoni's indomitability and his coldness are of a piece: "Delighting in the tumult and in the struggles of life, he was equally a stranger to pity and to fear; his very courage was a sort of animal ferocity . . . a constitutional hardiness of nerve, that cannot feel and that, therefore, cannot fear" (MU 358). Even before she journeyed to Italy, "the thought of being solely in his power, in a foreign land, was terrifying to her" (MU 157) because there was nothing in his overbearing machismo that referred, much less deferred, to her. Her first glimpses at the Italian landscape prefigure her visions of female corpses slain by ruthless men: "Beyond Milan, the country wore the aspect of a ruder devastation; and though every thing seemed now quiet, the repose was like that of death, spread over features, which retain the impression of the last convulsion" (MU 172).

Although Emily intuits the connection between political disorder and violence towards women, Radcliffe withholds from Emily the specifically political critique of Montoni she grants to us: Emily does not know, as we do, that Montoni is a chief of *condottieri* employed in civil wars rather than a leader of private thieves. But she is allowed to know that his ferocity is momentous. The violence that his military community inflicts upon the land contrasts with St. Aubert's love of his and reminds us again that male sentimentality, as Burke had presented it, is the affective basis of civil order, that tenderness towards women and countryside alike conduce to mitigate otherwise anarchically brute and contentious men into peaceable political subjects. No wonder, the implication runs, there is civil war in Italy.

Inspired by a Burkean conception of the nation as a fragile body, Emily's fearful fantasies about Montoni's untamed masculinity recur to the violability of the female body under gleefully savage sexual attack. Listening to the uproar of Montoni's unruly band, "Emily, in her remote chamber, heard their loud shouts and strains of exultation, like the orgies of furies over some horrid sacrifice. She even feared they were about to commit some barbarous deed" (MU 357). Emily fears that Montoni's men will burst through the room where she and her aunt have retreated to wait out Montoni's rage (MU 314), or that "ruffians" will penetrate her chamber by means of a secret passageway (MU 319); and later the sight of wild soldiers rushing down the corridors in search of womenfolk persuades her to cede her property to Montoni in exchange for his protection of her from the sexual violence of his cronies (MU 430–31).

But Burke himself is equivocal about the sex of the nation he embodies, at times figuring it as a naked queen beset by ruffians, and at others as an old father hacked to pieces by his savage progeny (RRF 146). So, too, Emily wends her way to Udolpho, lately under siege by rival soldiers, along scarred earth, strewn with blasted battlements, uprooted trees, blood-soaked clothing, and perhaps worse: dismembered bodies. Weaving double entendres into virtually every sentence, and delaying the resolution until the last moment, Radcliffe evokes the terror of dismemberment with breathtaking indirection:

> Emily feared to look forward, lest some object of horror should meet her eye. The path was often strewn with broken heads of arrows, and with shattered remains of armour. . . . At every step she took, Emily feared to see some vestige of death. . . . As Ugo held again forth the torch, steel glittered between the fallen trees; the ground beneath was covered with broken arms, and with the torn vestments of soldiers, whose mangled forms Emily almost expected to see. (MU 425)

The *heads, remains,* and *arms* strewn across the battleground turn out to pertain to weapons, not persons. But Emily's vision of the pageantry of carnage and her anxiety about sexual violence, constructed from the scattered limbs,

mutilated carcasses, and promiscuous slaughter evoked in the *Reflections,* are not the offspring of a girl's naughty imagination: rape is threatened, and battles do take place (the corpses are presumably strewn somewhere else). Though the conclusion of the novel buries these narrative "facts" about Italian history, it cannot sweep them entirely away by saying that Emily culpably imagined everything.

When we take seriously the historicity of Montoni's fierceness, *Udolpho* becomes exceedingly difficult to read, for the novel pulls one way as a political gothic and quite another as a novel of manners. Madame Montoni bears the brunt of this tension. Having powerfully evoked the anxiety of civil war, the novel proceeds to present Montoni as an aggrieved husband of a wife who earns our contempt by the appalling effrontery with which she complains about him—him whose pastimes include assassination, plunder, rapine, treachery, torture, and woman-selling. So transgressive is female complaint even under these atrocious conditions that it is easier to forget Montoni's crimes than to honor his wife's vociferous claims to our compassion. Insofar as Emily regards the "perverted understanding and obstinate temper" (MU 282) of her aunt and not the lawlessness of Montoni as the cause of her hardships, she misrecognizes the genre of her own story. Emily has not had a lot to amuse her since the death of her parents and her exile from home, but her aunt's huffy protests strike her as ludicrous "burlesque" (MU 281), funny enough to offset the cumulative pain of many months: "If any thing could have made Emily smile in these moments, it would have been this speech of her aunt" (MU 281). The suffering of St. Aubert and even the flagrant self-pity of Valancourt are permitted a dignity Madame Montoni's must never possess. Female complaint becomes burlesque—shrill and unfeminine—the moment it is articulated at all. Emily's sufferings are spared of our contempt because she does not assert her own worthiness of pity—the narrator does that for her. Rather than claim her status as a feeling subject, she negotiates her suffering via that of other people: "Hers was a *silent* anguish, weeping, yet enduring. . . . She wept to think of what her parents would have suffered could they have foreseen the events of her future life" (MU 329).

But despite these cues, which tell us to despise Madame Montoni, others invite us not to read as Emily does. When Madame Montoni laments that she is "chained for life to such a vile, deceitful, cruel monster!" (MU 280), we who are reading a gothic novel cannot regard her description as hyperbolic. Her temper is certainly irksome, but his occupies another generic and ontological register altogether. The broad outlines of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* incriminate female complaints, but its gaps legitimize them. Consequently, when Emily responds to her aunt's complaint about Montoni's greed and cruelty by asking incredulously, "What are the circumstances, that particularly affect you?" (MU 280), we must concur that Emily *is* deficient in feeling. Madame Montoni's crassness, like that of Burney's Madame Duval (of

whom she is a gothic permutation), enables her to mount a compelling critique of sensibility: "'Unfeeling, cruel girl! . . . and so you would persuade me, that I have no reason to complain. . . . Is it the way to console me, to endeavour to persuade me out of my senses and my feelings, because you happen to have no feelings yourself. I thought I was opening my heart to a person, who could sympathize with my distress, but I find, that your people of sensibility can feel for nobody but themselves!" (MU 283).

Madame Montoni reminds us that sentimentality enforces and mystifies certain social priorities by a converse operation of desensitization. It ensures the stable continuance of certain arrangements unconflictually by privileging the feelings of some and excluding from sympathy the feelings of those whose interests fall outside dominant values. Far from granting all persons access to the dignity of interiority by virtue of their capacity for feeling, sentimentality always entails exclusion. The Countess of Villefort—the bad (i.e., female) sentimentalist—earns our scorn when she puts her feelings before those of her husband, who, much like Montoni, has dragged his new wife to a dismal ancestral castle in the "horrid" mountains. For the reader fully acclimated to the codes of male sentimentality, of course, it goes without saying that the Countess's feelings do not count, that she ought to feel—as we do—for her husband, for his relations, and for the home in which they have dwelled. But the Countess's refractoriness cannot be dismissed. Censuring her insubordination comes at the price of forgetting that the most recent of the ancestors she so obnoxiously fails to revere was a murderer, after all, and that the ancestral seat she damns herself by judging so distasteful is the site of a crime that encompasses the whole novel: the poisoning of the Marchioness de Villeroi, sister to St. Aubert and Madame Cheron/Montoni, and aunt to Emily. Thus a minor character, obtruding upon the narrative for no other purpose than to provoke and contain animus against sentimental women, damages the luster of male sentimentality by disclosing the violence to women on which it covertly subsists and by making us wonder about the women who, unlike Madame Montoni and the Countess, never complain.

Madame Montoni's complaints are likewise outside the sentimental loop: her suffering is risible, her feelings of no consequence. In a world effectively governed by male sentimentality, domestic conflict would never surface: Madame Montoni would die quietly and compliantly without leaving a trace—no suspicious-looking corpses, no corpus of stories circulated by servants, no telltale ghosts. But she is not sentimentally constituted. Die she does, but not until she makes a huge fuss, and not until she is driven to the grave by a husband who makes no secret of his means (torture) and motives (greed). There is something in her militantly unsentimental resistance to Montoni's cruelty that invites us to read against the grain of the novel, which is always obliging us to mark her, as opposed to Montoni or St. Aubert, as the source of Emily's woe. When Emily, faced with ruffians bursting in the

door, sagely declares, "Be calm, madam . . . I entreat you to be calm," it is Madame Montoni who tells us that Emily is shaking like a leaf: "You can scarcely support yourself" (MU 316). This impatience with high-minded cant affords us a rare glimpse of authorial irony, and with that a different and an irreverent perspective onto the novel. Eventually Madame Montoni's characterization jumps tracks altogether. When Emily urges her to submit to Montoni's demands, and disavows any interest in the property that would descend to her after her aunt's death, Madame Montoni exhibits a moral and emotional depth:

> Her aunt appeared to be affected. "You are not unworthy of these estates, niece," said she: "I would wish to keep them for your sake—you shew a virtue I did not expect."
>
> "How have I deserved this reproof, madam?" said Emily sorrowfully.
>
> "Reproof!" replied Madame Montoni: "I meant to praise your virtue." (MU 308)

No longer unequivocally offensive, Madame Montoni now appears as a woman who cares about "virtue" and who is impressed to discover that Emily is more interested in her well-being than her cash value. This discovery commits her to resist Montoni not for herself—her own cause is lost—but for Emily. Her willingness to be confined in a torture chamber to preserve Emily's estates looks heroic rather than monstrous, and shows the kind of mettle sentimental heroes lack. After all, St. Aubert's penchant for higher things left his daughter destitute in the first place. Soon, Emily follows her aunt's example, framing her resistance to Montoni in Wollstonecraftean terms of rights. And though she retains propriety by negotiating ethical activity through men—wanting the property for Valancourt's sake, not her own—the plot pointedly refuses to underwrite this transfer: just when Emily is suffering to keep her property for Valancourt, he is seeking "amusement" (MU 294) with corrupt French ladies; and far from being imprisoned at Udolpho for having attempted to rescue her (as Emily pathetically imagines), he is arrested in Paris after falling in with cardsharps.

Because sentimental men are not interested in heroism, virago figures such as Madame Montoni take up the valorous slack, and heroines like Emily find ways of following suit without being grotesque. Reproaching soldiers who fainted at the sight of a ghost, Annette protests men's dereliction of the duties of manhood: "No, no, says I, there is reason in all things: though I might have fallen down in a fit, that was no rule for them, being because it is no business of mine to look gruff, and fight battles" (MU 392). But Annette's insistence on her gendered prerogative to be frightened without shame does not apply to the gently born Emily. It never befalls her to "look gruff and fight battles"—Wollstonecraft too assures her readers that she did not want to raise a nation of amazons—but she and her aunt possess

more in the way of manly spirit than men do in the novel. Any emancipatory import this chiasmus might support, however, collapses; a woman's heroism stops with her body. She cedes her property as soon as Montoni threatens her with gang rape: "To brave any longer the injustice of Montoni would not be fortitude, but rashness" (MU 430). And when she recovers the property upon Montoni's death, she gives it away: the wronged woman has so little sway in the sentimental world to which Emily is finally restored that she feels no attachment to the estates her aunt died to preserve for her.

But while male sentimentality discredits the complaints articulated by Madame Montoni's story, and indeed by Emily's own, marginalized discourses generate them in bewildering plenty: stories about Laurentini exist in several versions, as do tales about the Marchioness and the crazed Sister Agnes. Indeed, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* abounds in inset tales about wronged wives and cast-off lovers circulated through networks of unofficial lore mostly by servants who have known the distressed ladies in question or who have heard and repeated stories about them. In Radcliffe's fiction, servants provide more than comic relief, though their loquacity irks, and with that deflates, even the most imperious of figures (the inquisitors in *The Italian,* or Montoni himself in *Udolpho,* for instance), just as their down-to-earth needs (take Annette's worst fear: "I shall die of hunger. I have had nothing to eat since dinner!" [MU 322]) foil the heroic tempers of their genteel counterparts, who seem to subsist on nothing. But servants also bear a different relation to the production of history. Radcliffe's heroines count on servants not simply to arrange their escapes, but also to tell them stories. This is especially true in *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* where servants have—or, at least, appear to have—access to ugly truths that have been misrepresented or forgotten, or covered up altogether, by the heads of households, usually themselves the perpetrators of the crimes. Radcliffe represents Emily's attitude towards their tales with an irony that is not often to be found in her treatment of gentlefolk. Clearly, Emily must show herself a worthy member of her class by being superior to the low cravings of mere suspense that enthrall the vulgar—such as ourselves. Accordingly, at the outset we see her sagely counseling Annette not to tell stories, particularly where family confidences are concerned. But if heroines stuck to scruples like these, gothic novels would never get told. Fortunately for us as well as for the servants who love an audience for their tales, Emily comes to regret not pursuing Annette's dark hints about Signora Laurentini and the black veil; she listens with bated breath first, cursing untoward digressions and interruptions, and chides Annette's indiscriminate appetite for narrative only after greedily listening to everything she can.

Why does Emily seek out stories she formerly cut short? Critics who privilege the conclusion of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* understand Emily's interest as a delusional susceptibility induced by the Udolphian sublime. But

Emily has had suspicions about her mother and the mysterious woman pictured in the miniature long before she gets to Udolpho. Udolpho stimulates Emily's imagination not because it is different from the coziness of La Vallée but rather because it is disturbingly similar to it: the nakedness of the violence she witnesses there bears a disturbing resemblance to the murder and betrayal she fears at home, and dares not articulate if she is to retain our esteem and differentiate herself from the noxious female complainers in the novel. Generally, Emily's gothic suspicions about home are presented as unconscious and hence as innocent, as when she sits "musing, upon her own circumstances and those of Madame Montoni, till her eye rested on the miniature picture, which she had found, after her father's death, among the papers he had enjoined her to destroy" (MU 259). Emily, of course, does *not* yet know that she is thinking about two sisters, one murdered by her husband and the other fast approaching the same end. But though Emily's imagination is permitted to sense a vague kinship between three sufferers bound by "melancholy circumstances," she is permitted no ideas about it.

Although Emily's curiosity suggests a readiness to distrust the benignity of fathers and husbands and an awareness that she has been kept in the dark, her pursuit of stories about Laurentini, the Marchioness, and Sister Agnes does not reflect anything so definite as an enlarging consciousness of the reality of female suffering, nor anything so subversive as an overt rebellion against her father's dying wish for her continued ignorance of his past. These stories come to her as confused fragments—replete with variants, changed names, concealed relationships, blurry boundaries, teasing lacunae, and stunning coincidences which may or may not be significant. Sometimes, it is true, Emily is cognizant of parallels between her own condition and that of the women she hears about. According to Annette's version, for example, Laurentini was desolate from unrequited love. Harassed by Montoni's suits for marriage, she becomes "melancholy and unhappy" (MU 237), pining for a beloved who never comes, until one evening she walks out the door and is never heard from again, except as a ghost. After her disappearance, Montoni files a claim for the property, as the closest heir. Emily scoffs at Annette's "silly tales" (MU 239), but when she is alone, this "strange history" (MU 240) makes her think about "her own strange situation, in the wild mountains of a foreign country" with a man who "exercised an usurped authority over her" (MU 240). Emily reads the tale of Laurentini as a variation on her own story of isolation and thwarted love. Like Laurentini, Emily too is independent of a father or husband; she too waits for a beloved who never comes and whose absence spells betrayal; she too resists menacing suits contrived by Montoni. Recollecting Montoni's "stern and contemptuous behaviour" (MU 240) to her aunt, Emily composes a variant that reassigns causes that Annette left to the supernatural. Laurentini did not simply disappear, Emily opines; rather, Montoni murdered her for property he couldn't gain through

marriage. Once Emily takes a glimpse at the figure behind the veil, she is convinced that her version has been authenticated.

The narrator scolds Emily for feeling "those thousand nameless terrors, which exist only in active imaginations, and which set reason and examination equally at defiance" (MU 240)—but such moralizing seems perfunctory and cannot in any case square with subsequent events which reason and examination confirm as actual and terrifying. This is especially true of the Marchioness's tale, related by the aged servant Dorothée. This household too, it appears, is haunted by the ghost of its deceased mistress, and for the same reason: murder. As Dorothée tells it, the Marchioness, in love with a man of whom her worldly father disapproved, was "commanded" by her father to marry the Marquis "for his money." Although brokenhearted over the man she still loved, the Marchioness "never complained" (MU 524). In fact, she hides her tears from her glowering husband, who grows more gloomy when his wife is visited by a certain "chevalier" (MU 524), who is rumored to have been privately married to the Marchioness before the forced marriage to the Marquis took place. The Marquis virtually imprisons his unhappy wife in the castle, refusing her all visitors. Despite her misery, however, Dorothée repeats, "still she never complained" (MU 525). A year later, however, the Marchioness grows ill, and the Marquis refuses to call a doctor until she shrieks with pain. He is seized with remorse and rushes to her bedside, whereupon his wife shows such solicitude for *his* suffering that he becomes distracted with grief. After she dies, "a frightful blackness spread all over her face" (MU 528), the sure sign of poison, and the distraught Marquis leaves the chateau forever soon after her burial.

The Marchioness's tale reiterates the tales about female suffering erupting everywhere in the novel, and subsequent details bring this forcibly to Emily's mind. When Dorothée shows Emily the pall on which the Marchioness's body was stretched, Emily recalls "the horror she had suffered upon discovering the dying Madame Montoni in the turret-chamber at Udolpho" (MU 532). Indeed, hallucinating a woman's corpse, Emily appears to see on this bed of death the bodies of all the women in the novel. Annette later brings Laurentini to mind, and Emily connects the image of the dead Marchioness to that of Laurentini's corpse decomposing behind the black curtain. And although she is dutifully silent on the subject, Emily's suspicion that her own father is the chevalier the Marchioness loved makes us wonder if the Marchioness's pall brings the death of her own mother to Emily's mind: after all, she too "never complained," pitying her husband rather than bemoaning her dissolution. Finally, Emily too falls under the shadow of the Marchioness's pall, for Dorothée's repeated allusions to her uncanny resemblance to the late Marchioness fuels the suspicion that she may be the Marchioness's daughter, and that a similar fate may befall her.

The "history of poor Agnes" (MU 577), the insane nun at the convent

where Emily briefly resides, brings Emily yet more tidings of suffering womanhood, and bewilders her with yet more parallels that she is at a loss to explain. Descended from a noble family, Sister Agnes was in love with a gentleman of no fortune, and was forced by her father to marry a wealthy man whom she disliked. Unable to restrain her passion, she commits adultery with her beloved, and before falling to the vengeance of her rightful husband, she is secretly carried away by her father to a convent, where she is prevailed upon eventually to take the veil. In order further to preserve her asylum, her father circulates rumors that she died at her husband's hand, and torn by passion and remorse, Sister Agnes loses her mind. Faced with Emily's surprise at her tale, Sister Frances declares, "I allow the story is uncommon, but not, I believe, without a parallel" (MU 577). In fact, the story has abundant parallels. Particularly when she says, "Good night, my sisters, remember me in your orisons" (MU 575), Sister Agnes fits into the *Hamlet* scheme underlying the novel, and becomes for a time a sentimentalized Ophelia figure, a frail vessel buffeted by male corruption on one hand and disappointed love on the other. But another parallel cuts somewhat closer. Emily considers the story a variation on the Marchioness's, and when she notes the familiarity of Sister Agnes's countenance, and the date of her confinement—the same year that the Marchioness expired—the conclusion that Sister Agnes and the Marchioness are one and the same woman, incriminating as it is to St. Aubert and the Marchioness both, seems inevitable.

These secret stories, which criticism on the novel has never condescended to unravel, are curiously ubiquitous, seeming at one and the same time to comprehend the story of one woman and the story of every woman. They spell out the same shocking message: every household conceals the dead body of its mistress. Challenging the justice as well as the feeling of men authorized to "protect" women, these stories privilege the passion of women, and assail the husbands or fathers who block that passion in the interests of money or convention. Judged by reigning standards of propriety, of course, such stories are grossly offensive: even adulteresses arouse our compassion, for their guilt is caused as well as subsumed by the tyranny and poor judgment of men. But even more upsetting, these unofficial tales undermine at least one of the raisons d'etre of male sentimentality itself. Burke, as we recall, had lamented the passing of chivalry precisely because sentimental men love and shield women by partaking of their softness. But the tales in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* tell us that women fare just as poorly under the dispensation of sentimentality as they do under the dispensation of martial virility. If anything, the absorption of feminine gender into masculinity overdetermines, although it also conceal, women's removal. Complainers and noncomplainers, good and bad alike, women come to the same pall. Now men's competitors over the site of legitimate affectivity, they either die out their redundancy, or live deadened to their own feelings.

These are not inferences Emily is permitted to make. *The Mysteries of Udolpho* thus baffles the reader who expects a *Bildungsroman.* Repetition brings no insight; rather than foster "progress" or "growth," it turns from it.[13] Although she finds herself at the site where the Marquis murdered his wife not long ago, Emily is never permitted to perceive that the Countess is similar to Madame Montoni, Sister Agnes, or the Marchioness. When the Count complains, "I have known what it is to love, and to lament the object of my love" (MU 564)—hardly a proper thing to say about a living spouse—Emily reverences the tears that fill his eyes. She never considers that the Countess may feel disappointed too; never wonders, as Catherine Morland surely would, about what happened to the Count's *first* wife; never trembles at what may befall the *second.* His statement "I have suffered" (MU 565)—the statement Madame Montoni and the Countess make all the time, the statement implied by all the tales about suffering womanhood—remains for Emily a declaration that only a man can make and receive the sympathy he asks for.

As if to reverse the cumulative tendency of gothic plots about domestic violence to discredit male sentimentality, the novel attempts to erase all of these stories of suffering women, and to refigure them instead as stories about men, classing the inset stories alongside the noxious novels the Countess reads. The narrator recasts every inset tale, and in effect the entire novel, by heralding the "brief history of LAURENTINI DI UDOLPHO" (MU 655). This history, unlike all the others, is not a rumor circulated by servants too simple to understand the real truth, not hysterical speculation indulged by a girl who has yet to learn to govern her passions by reason. As such, it is, detail for detail, an antisentimental narrative, rationalizing the patriarchal discipline of women by representing it as deserved, and demonizing their passion as criminal. The dying "Sister Agnes" has already revealed herself as Laurentini, but the crime that drove her crazy is murder. Unlike the unfortunate women of the inset tales, her problem is not that she has been bullied by greedy parents or guardians, but rather "left to her own discretion" (MU 655). Lacking Emily's education in self-discipline, she indulges a reciprocal passion for the Marquis de Villeroi with "all the delirium of Italian love" (MU 656). After awaiting her beloved's arrival week after week, and after resisting Montoni's suit, she learns that the Marquis has married the Marchioness. Crazed with jealousy, she throws herself before the Marquis with the intention of slaying herself, but resentment yielding to love, she faints instead. The Marquis, a man of feeling, yields to her "beauty and sensibility," and renewing his love for the fiery *italienne,* is eventually convinced by her of his wife's unfaithfulness and agrees to murder her by slow poison. Touched by the meekness of his dying wife, who feels for him even as she dies, the Marquis bribes the doctor to keep silent, and lets Laurentini live on the condition that she retire to a convent.

This extraordinary history, followed immediately by the disclosure of the "real" truth about the figure behind the veil, realigns the novel with the dominant discourse of male sentimentality by dramatically regendering almost all the guilt and suffering in the novel. No longer the victim of Montoni's greed, Laurentini is herself a murderess. Her passions (the moral goes) should have been broken by a male discipline: she should have accepted Montoni's suit. By comparison, the Marquis, who actually committed the murder, is sympathetic. His agency is submerged: not a word is spoken of his treachery in love, and as for the murder itself, "the commission of a crime" (MU 664) is attributed solely to Laurentini. The narrator even suggests that the Marquis may never have turned to Laurentini if the mild Marchioness, herself in love with another man, had mustered more than "indifference" (MU 658) for her husband. Like Madame Montoni, and like Laurentini, even the good Marchioness got what was coming to her. And not merely these women, but Emily too is inculpated, though less conspicuously. One might think hers the one case of virtuously suffering womanhood, but the "brief history of SIGNORA LAURENTINI DI UDOLPHO" tells us differently. By allowing herself—even if only tacitly—to cast her father as the injurer of her mother, Emily becomes the aggriever. Montoni is transformed into the man wronged by a flighty female's volatile imagination, and despite his incarceration on lesser charges, he is acquitted of the atrocities Emily had attributed to him. Even Valancourt—also jailed during the course of the novel—stands a wronged man, whose guilt, all but completely glossed over by the end of the novel, turns out to have been an exaggeration which Emily too hastily believed.

Such realignment causes a radical disjunction between the problems that animate the plot and the solutions proffered at its close. The novel's most powerful figure, Montoni, and the menaces he presents become its greatest casualty. By the time we reach the conclusion, the long and very gripping central episode at Udolpho has been buried by the surplus of material inculpating sentient femininity, and Montoni himself has dwindled from a fearsome chief of *condottieri,* carving his country to pieces, to a venal fellow saddled with gambling debts, a fellow too *affairé* with intrigues to think about murdering women and stashing their bodies. But recasting Emily's terror about Montoni as paranoia, as bad, female "sensibility" mistakenly projecting its own disorder onto unoffending gentlemen, entails denying the horror of civil war, a horror which the novel dramatized vividly and extensively. And precisely because Montoni's character is grounded in accepted facts about the history of Italy on which Radcliffe is drawing, as well as in anxieties about the present upheaval in France which colors the representation and reception of that history, this horror cannot be so simply laid to rest, or peripheralized to the point of irrelevance.

In deflating Montoni, and concomitantly in faulting Emily for believing in the power of men when it is actually women who have the power as well as the tendency to harm, Radcliffe from the point of view of some readers dealt an implicitly pro-feminist blow.[14] To my mind, the opposite is true, and this returns me to the question that opened this chapter: why is the contention over the gendering of suffering and guilt represented again and again? First of all, the criminalization of women and the deflation of masculine power in *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* far from signifying any empowerment of women, only conceals the male-to-female violence which is endemic under sentimentality, and which, if represented, would take away one of the principal reasons male sentimentality exists. Beneath its claim to promote the protection of women by caring men, male sentimentality posits (other) women as the threat from which women as well as men must be protected by men: Laurentini is the murderer of the Marchioness; Madame Montoni persecutes Emily; the Countess mistreats her stepdaughter. Second of all, this presentation of men as the aggrieved parties in a gender crisis between the sexes distracts us from another, evidently more horrifying problem, indeed from the problem which brings male sentimentality into being to begin with: civil war, and the crisis *within* masculinity to which it draws attention.

Terrifying as they are, Emily tolerates the absorption of spectacles and recitals of female woe into an economy of male sentimentality, but only so long as the social order that sentimentality serves can be represented as sufficient and productive, judicious and sensitive. What if these conditions do not obtain? Ignorant of Montoni's real profession, Emily is not asked, as we are, to recognize the insufficiency of male order, an insufficiency written, as we have seen, across the landscape of Italy, and visible in the carnage of battle—spectacles whose "facticity" stands. Such disintegration is not limited to the other-world of Italy. In France as well, anarchy is discernible beneath the cozy houses of sweet gentlemen. In the not so distant past, even the province where La Vallée is situated "was over-run by troops of men, who took advantage of the tumults, and became plunderers" (MU 78), necessitating the construction of hidden compartments beneath floorboards to secrete riches and documents. The Count's chateau is still vulnerable, only now the disorder is under the landscape rather than on it. The strange disappearances haunting it are caused, we learn, not by ghosts, but (is this better or worse?) by "a desperate horde of banditti" (MU 634) who penetrate the house via concealed doors and hidden panels that lead to vast subterranean networks of passages carved out of rock. Uneasiness about the security of persons and property can hardly be allayed by information telling us that houses and landscapes may conceal lawless men intent upon "murder and plunder" (MU 634). Given the reality of civil war, supernatural agency may be more comforting than "natural" explanations.

The conclusion of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* conceals its contradictions.

Enriching Emily beyond her wildest expectation, and restoring the tearful Valancourt to her esteem, the final chapter reasserts filial devotion with a mania. Recouping La Vallée (which St. Aubert had lost), and recovering L'Epourville (which he had sold), Emily and Valancourt appear to pass their wedded lives in a sort of continual homage to the ghost of St. Aubert: whether at La Vallée, near the plane tree, a "spot sacred to the memory of St. Aubert" (MU 671), or at his ancestral home, where they pass time each year "in tender respect to his memory" (MU 672), the pair make a sort of religion out of "imitat[ing] his benevolence" (MU 671), aspiring "to moral and labouring for intellectual improvement," assured that they are safe, the power of vicious people being "transient and their punishment certain" (MU 672).

But it is not necessary to privilege the conclusion, nor easy, given its blatancy, to do so. Austen's Catherine Morland of *Northanger Abbey* did not. "I am got to the black veil," she exclaims. "I know it must be a skeleton. I am sure it is Laurentina's skeleton" (NA 39–40). After Catherine has finished the novel, she retains a sense of its horrors, not its rational explanations. Her expectation of journeying to a gothic abbey to find "some traditional legends, some awful memorials of an injured and ill-fated nun" (NA 141) proves that she couldn't care less about the belated and "brief history of SIGNORA LAURENTINI" which discredits legends and demonizes ill-fated nuns. What sticks for Catherine is the suspicion that behind the walls or beneath the elegant tombstones testifying to a husband's love she will find the body of a suffering woman, a radical suspicion indulged freely in the early and untrammeled *Sicilian Romance* (1790), and as we have seen, far more anxiously in the later *Udolpho*. Although *Northanger Abbey* proves Catherine wrong in point of machinery, it proves her right in every other respect. Henry Tilney, the "hero" of this novel, is full of misplaced confidence in sentimentality. But national community ("Remember that we are English"), religious affiliation (". . . that we are Christians"), ideological apparatuses ("law," "education," "social and literary intercourse"), and accepted methods of surveillance ("newspapers," "roads," and a "neighbourhood of voluntary spies" [NA 197–98]) do not restrain his father's insolence and incivility. They only silence women's protest (Mrs. Tilney never complained) and incriminate their challenge (Henry scolds Catherine for harboring suspicions). *Udolpho* and *Northanger Abbey* tread the same war-torn ground. Radcliffe's concluding body switch hints formally at what Catherine, thanks in part to *Udolpho* itself, articulates more directly, the suspicion that the civilized practices of sentimentality conceal rather than alleviate the wrongs of women.

Losing the Mother in the Judge: The Italian

Even though their misfortunes give them a lot to think about, Radcliffe's characters, as we have seen, are chary of introspection: there is so much not to know that reflection is a dangerous and sometimes forbidden business. But in *The Italian* especially, where the virtuous so often find themselves enclosed, impeded, imprisoned in dungeons, torture chambers, or dank subterraneous passages, interiority is pain. Radcliffe's characters make up for the sparingness of their self-reflection here with an extraordinary attention to the landscape[1]—particularly when, in the throes of acute suffering, they observe the "face of nature" with spellbound and spellbinding sensitivity. This attention is at times reassuring: their affliction can't be *that* bad if it leaves them with leisure enough to engage in edifying meditations. Accordingly, when Ellena di Rosalba, the heroine of *The Italian,* is immured in a convent in the Apennines, she stands at the window of her turret, letting her eyes range, as her body cannot, over the "wide and freely-sublime scene without"—at the "vast precipices," the "gigantic pine," the "awful wildness of the rocks," and the "extensive plains" either "tumbled with the mountains" or "abandoned to the flocks, which, in summer, feed on their aromatic herbage." Stabilizing a self under brutally dislocating stress by making it the means through which the world outside is apprehended and ordered, this turn outward affords Ellena much in the way of "dreadful pleasure" that fortifies her: effaced as well as augmented by having projected herself onto the awesome force and expansiveness of the landscape, she feels that "man, the giant who now held her in captivity" shrinks "to the diminutiveness of a fairy," and that "his utmost force" proves "unable to enchain her soul" (I 90–91).[2]

In *The Italian,* male and female characters alike gaze longingly at the expansive landscape outside as though it possessed a pristine majesty, dis-

tinct from and untouched by the sordid human world inside which cramps them. Attractive as these outer/inner, natural/social polarities may be, however, they are false, and Radcliffe's characters know it. Far from affording them mastery, escape, or consolation, the landscape itself just as often encodes their anxiety about obliteration in monumental proportions. After rescuing Ellena from the deadly clutches of the abbess at San Stefano, for example, Vivaldi surveys the alpine vista stretching before them only to perceive there an even more overwhelming instance of the oppression he and Ellena are trying to elude. "To such a scene as this," he remarks,

> "a Roman Emperor came, only for the purpose of witnessing the most barbarous exhibition; to indulge the most savage delights! Here, Claudius celebrated the accomplishment of his arduous work, an aqueduct to carry the overflowing waters of the Celano to Rome, by a naval fight, in which hundreds of wretched slaves perished for his amusement! Its pure and polished surface was stained with human blood, and roughened by the plunging bodies of the slain, while the gilded gallies of the Emperor floated gaily around, and these beautiful shores were made to echo with applauding yells, worthy of the furies!" (I 159–60)

Like Radcliffe's earlier fiction, *The Italian* is haunted by the human history written across the landscape—discernible either in the ruined remains of what once was or in evocative fragments of servants' lore and ancient narrative. And as Vivaldi's meditation here vividly attests, that history is appalling: it spells out the imponderable fact of atrocity. Radcliffe's characters are always forgetting and remembering (and forgetting . . .) atrocious deeds. Alienated from the masculine world of history much as Austen's Catherine Morland is, Ellena is incredulous of the Roman history Vivaldi cites—"We scarcely dare to trust the truth of history," she observes, "in some of its traits of human nature" (I 160)—even though she herself has only too much reason to believe the very worst of human nature. Vivaldi seems dimly aware of his drive to deny atrocity by repressing his consciousness of it. Locked up in the vaults of the Inquisition, he is stunned by the existence of torture as if it were somehow a new discovery to him, though in fact he had "often received particular accounts" of inquisitorial torture long before, and had even specifically "believed" in the authenticity of such accounts. But this preknowledge notwithstanding, he echoes the same amnesiac incredulity Ellena had earlier evinced when faced with traces of imperial brutality: "Is it possible!" he exclaims. "Can this be in human nature!" (I 198). But whenever characters in *The Italian* forget their dreadful knowledge about "human nature," the horizon looms up to remind them. When Vivaldi is carried off to the Inquisition, which figures here as heir to the cruelty of imperial Rome, he sees the ruins of Rome by moonlight, and his imagination dwells on "those sacred ruins, those gigantic skeletons, which once enclosed a soul, whose

energies governed a world!" (I 195), as if the city were yet another dungeon ready to receive him, and as if the ruins were a decayed body which, like Bianchi's livid corpse, tells tales about heinous deeds. Or, when Ellena comes upon a village festival where rustics are putting on an outdoor play, what might have been a picturesque scene abruptly turns into a dreadful one: they are staging the story of Virginia, the Roman maiden whose father stabbed her to death so that Appius Claudius, yet another Roman emperor, could not rape her and bring dishonor to the family.

Clearly, the world is a vast tableau of horror in *The Italian*: atrocity is everywhere. To some extent, of course, atrocity is, first of all, an intimate psychic fact displaced uncannily onto the world outside precisely because it is too horrible to think about as personal. In the case at hand, for example, Ellena comes upon the spectacle of Virginius slaying his daughter just as Ellena is trying not to recognize what she already half knows—that is, that her own "father" has just attempted to stab her to death. But at the same time, atrocity is also out there as a historical and social fact, both coextensive with and determinative of the characters' pain, and as such it can neither be thought about nor altogether forgotten. While the paradigmatic scenes in Radcliffe's earlier novels dwell upon the recumbent bodies of victimage—decidedly female in *The Romance of the Forest;* equivocal, but finally male in *The Mysteries of Udolpho—The Italian* recurs to bodies of power, and to the highly discordant traces of grandeur and devastation they have left in their wake. As in *Northanger Abbey,* where Catherine Morland finds that a discussion of the English landscape, with its prospects, enclosures, and crownlands, leads inexorably to politics and from there to her silencing, so does the landscape in *The Italian,* with its polished surfaces of enameled aqueducts stained with human blood and its fallen columns, laid waste by an earthquake in punishment for some unspeakable domestic iniquity, pose political as well as personal riddles. "Sadism demands a story," as Laura Mulvey has put it, in a line that has become a sort of locus classicus for feminist narrative theorists; and it is the destiny of Radcliffe's characters to piece this sadistic story and history together. But *The Italian* will also show how Teresa de Lauretis's counterargument that story demands sadism is equally true, and not merely because suspenseful narration is repeatedly described as a species of torment, but also and more fundamentally because that story itself is both inspired and regulated by structures that ultimately negate women.[3] As we shall see, in *The Italian* sentimentality, which demands the very atrocity it opposes, gives way without opposition to the authoritarian rigor of law itself.

The *frissons* aroused by dreadful gore, of course, like the melancholy generated by graveyards or lunatic asylums, are part of the legacy of eighteenth-century sentimentality. In *The Italian,* this legacy is discernible not only in allusions to the epic depravity of classical history, but also in an emphasis on

domestic crime—fratricide, incestuous rape, the murder of children—as well as on the practice of torture, which figures prominently here both as a punitive method (at San Stefano) and as a procedure of interrogation (at the Italian Inquisition). Given this prevalence of outrageous transgression against humanity, gothic narration itself becomes a crime. If Paulo's digressiveness makes him "an ingenious tormentor" (I 156), surely Radcliffe, who contrives all our "tortures of suspense" (I 79), is no less. But Radcliffe's preoccupation with violence so excessive as to leave ordinary inhibitions far behind cannot be dismissed as genteelly recreational sensationalism. Daniel Cottom observes that even the apparently very rarefied "literary environment" of Radcliffe's novels is grounded in "historical life."[4] Because gothicism has become so distinctive a mode, it is easy to overlook the materiality of the oppression it invokes. As Cottom once again reminds us, no less distinguished a historian than Marc Bloch remarked that "it was not only in the novels of Mrs. Radcliffe that castles, whether large or small, had their oubliettes."[5] The success of gothic fiction surely conventionalized the paraphernalia of atrocity—in *Northanger Abbey,* for example, Henry beguiles Catherine with images of underground chambers, in one of which lies "a dagger, in another a few drops of blood, and in a third the remains of some instrument of torture."[6] But even conventional paraphernalia is not therefore only conventional, i.e., purely imaginary. Radcliffe's representations of unbounded cruelty in *The Italian* appear to have as much to do with commonplace anxiety about France and observations about England as they do with fantasies about the distant Mediterranean countries where passions are hot, fantasies which are easier to indulge precisely because, as everyone knows, Radcliffe never saw such places. When she visited Brougham Castle, Radcliffe carefully noted in its oldest sections the "[d]ungeons, secret passages and heavy iron rings [that] remain to hint of unhappy wretches, who were, perhaps, rescued only by death from these horrible engines of a tyrant's will." While inspecting the castle Radcliffe is already practicing for *The Italian* as well as for *Gaston de Blondeville*, gothicizing the pain still traceable there by describing the visual and (even more pointedly) aural hallucinations it excites: "One almost saw the surly keeper descending through this door-case, and heard him rattle the keys of the chambers above [in the turret], listening with indifference to the clank of chains and to the echo of that groan below, which seemed to rend the heart it burst from." Still, torture and incarceration are historical realities which Radcliffe cannot think about without also thinking about their obvious political explanation: the insecurity of feudal rule before what Burke called the "age of chivalry," before the sentiment of "fealty . . . freed both kings and subjects from the precautions of tyranny" (RRF 129). With their oubliettes, dungeons, and manacles, castles are in Radcliffe's words "symptoms of the cruelties, by which their first lords revenged themselves upon others the wretchedness of the continual suspicion felt by themselves."[7]

From the vantage point of eighteenth-century England, torture was hardly a remote affair. Chosen for its accessibility as a recent and familiar event, Burke's inaugural instance of the "*sublime*" and its crucial relationship to "ideas of pain" is "the late unfortunate regicide in France": Robert Francis Damiens was tortured and then put to death for attempting to murder Louis XV in April of 1757, only a month before the first edition of *A Philosophical Enquiry* appeared.[8] And although the practice of torture as a procedure of interrogation had for various reasons waned in Europe throughout the eighteenth century, it was not uncommon. When Samuel Johnson toured Paris, for example, he visited a "*chambre de question*" evidently without considering it worthy of the slightest comment; when on another occasion a Dutch woman in his company denounced "the horrours of the Inquisition," he defended the cooperation of "civil power" with "the church" in "punishing those who dared to attack the established religion"; and when, comparing the Dutch judicial system (which authorized torture) to the English system (which did not), a Dutch man "inveighed against the barbarity of putting an accused person to the torture, in order to force a confession," Johnson defended the justice of torture as a "favour" to the accused: "No man is put to the torture [in Holland], unless there is as much evidence against him as would amount to conviction in England. An accused person among you, therefore, has one chance more to escape punishment, than those who are tried among us."[9]

As I have already suggested, during the 1790s, atrocity played a conspicuous and highly contested role in the "historical life" Cottom urges us to bring to bear on Radcliffe's work. Although Boswell describes Johnson's position on torture as perversely argumentative, born of manly impatience with enlightenment *cause célèbres,* he takes every opportunity to underscore Johnson's authoritarian firmness because the *Life of Johnson* itself is a counterrevolutionary effort, recommended to the public specifically as an "effectual antidote to that detestable sophistry which has been lately imported from France." Given this agenda, Boswell uses Johnson's authority to affirm that the torture established by law and prosecuted by the state is measured, judicious, and necessary, and he attributes "real" torture and atrocity instead to pernicious *philosophes* conniving against the "peace, good order, and happiness of society, in our free and prosperous country."[10] Similarly, well before the prison massacres and the Reign of Terror made narratives about slaughter, mutilation, and sacrilege commonplace to British audiences—among the atrocities reported in *The Times,* for example, is the roasting alive of the naked daughters of French gentlemen[11]—Burke attempted to mobilize counterrevolutionary sentiment by invoking violence so monstrous that it exceeds our capacity for conceptualization as well as all possibility of containment. In depicting the "atrocious spectacle of the sixth of October 1789" (RRF 131), he employs two overlapping and to some extent contradictory

discourses: one of overrefinement, to describe enlightenment *philosophes*—economists and sophisters—whose excessive abstraction has rendered them insensible to the cruelties they calculate; and the other of barbarity, to describe insurgents—cannibals and savages—whose passions are not disciplined by reverence for their country and the royal persons who embody it. In Burke's hands, atrocity is not simply the incitement to sentimentality; the threat of violence is already the very premise of sentimentality. The naked queen menaced by ruffians beating down her bedroom door during a moment of insurrectionary violence becomes the symbol of a state which at all times needs our sheltering chivalry and love because at all times it is so vulnerable. In reactionary deployments of sentimentality, in other words, the queen is always on the verge of being raped; take the threat away and the basis of sentimentality itself will disappear.

The ideological rupture in the 1790s charges narratives of atrocity in distinctive ways, and this chapter will ponder how the Revolution in France and the aftermath of reaction in England condition Radcliffe's representation of atrocity. If the *Reflections on the Revolution in France* had suggested that atrocity was something categorically uncivilized, outside the boundaries of the state and its laws and alien to the customs, the atrocity evoked again and again in *The Italian* inheres in the violence of civilized practices, institutions, and figures themselves. Burke's "furies" are the brutish crowd of women insulting the royal captives on their dolorous path to Paris (RRF 122). But, as we saw at the outset of this chapter, the "furies" Vivaldi conjures are members of the ruling class, who stage and applaud carnage to satisfy their wanton tastes; and the horrid gaiety of this scene reminds us of the glittering musical soirées staged by Vivaldi's own mother, the Marchesa, when she is not busy plotting murder in the interests of class. To some extent, gothic narrative is progressive by default. In a famous 1790 caricature by Holland, for example, Burke himself—figured as a "Knight of Woful [sic] Countenance"—proudly bears the "Shield of Aristocracy and Despotism" on which are emblazoned images associated with the worst excesses of French tyranny: the Bastille; two men burning at an auto-da-fé; a torture victim stretched out on a wheel, with an axe and scourge close by; and a prisoner chained to a wall in a dungeon. Clearly, the popular iconography of state-sponsored atrocity that Holland employs here intersects with the stock in trade of gothic fiction, which features machinations of acquisitive aristocrats friendly with monarchs; the unnatural cruelty of monastic, antidomestic culture; the horrors of civil and ecclesiastical torture; and either the massive grimness of the Bastille itself (as in *The Romance of the Forest*), or more typically the gloomy dungeons of countless other chateaux.

This intersection notwithstanding, the political valence of gothic, even in its virulently anticlerical modes, is no simple matter. Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) made an enormous impact on Radcliffe, and its political impli-

cations are never unitary. Though it dramatizes the greed and repressiveness of the Spanish aristocracy and the Catholic Church with campy abandon, it traces atrocity to the reflexes of rebellion as well. One of its most luridly sensationalistic scenes reads like many firsthand accounts of the Terror, for a violent mob overruns a convent and tramples a "Domina," treats "her with every species of cruelty which hate or vindictive fury could invent," and (not content with her mere death) inflicts certain other horrible but unspecified indignities upon her lifeless body, reducing it at last to "a mass of flesh, unsightly, shapeless, and disgusting."[12] To be sure, there is some gruesome justice here—she was, after all, a mistress of savage cruelty, entirely deserving of the mob's rage. But Lewis is careful to show that the mob's violence, which avenges itself on the innocent as well as on the guilty, is beyond the reach of any principle of humanity, and that its eruption is ultimately as disfiguring and deadly as the excessive containment of the Church and its minions.

Although Radcliffe does not represent excessive repression and excessive violence as stages of the same problematic, as Lewis does, her novel also emerges from ideologically conflicting plots about atrocity, its agents, and its victims. *The Italian* is constituted by two distinct movements which together make the narrative as a whole incoherent: first, a progressive drive to assail the insolence and callousness of the old regime, and to celebrate instead tender domesticity promised by the marriage of Vivaldi and Ellena; and second, a reactionary drive to defend authority and validate its efficacy, which renders everything established in the first instance pointless. Radcliffe thus both indulges and finally represses the tendencies of gothic to assail the old regime.

Whether addressing the spectacular carnage staged for the amusement of Roman emperors, the use of torture by the Italian Inquisition, or the crimes parents commit against children in the name of family honor, *The Italian* reverses Burke, presenting that terror not as the intrusion of barbarous excess from outside the boundaries of civilization, but as a normal practice sponsored by states in such advanced stages of moral decay that they can scarcely recognize much less recoil from their own inhumanity. Exemplifying the unholy alliance of the Church with the worldly interests of class, for example, the Marchesa and Father Schedoni together justify their schemes by alluding to "public decency" and to the "public good" (I 111), thus portraying their plot to murder as a civic duty, correcting the oversight of "our lawgivers" who for some reason failed to foresee "the justness, nay the necessity" of preventing or punishing "criminal marriages" (I 168). Sometimes neither is taken in by such casuistry. At other times, we are informed, "the Marchesa and Schedoni mutually, and sincerely, lost their remembrance of [their] unworthy motives" (I 53) amidst their double-talk. Given the corruptness of established power, Radcliffe seems to suggest, all ethical discourse is dangerously adul-

terable. Time and time again, we are presented with people who talk "of morals and decorum" while themselves egregiously "violating some of the plainest obligations of humanity and justice" (I 120), or who are "seriously defining the limits of virtue, at the very moment in which they meditated the most atrocious crime" (I 173), and even Bianchi lets go of "fastidious scruples" (I 38), and Olivia advises "temporizing" (I 97).

Considering the virulence of political reaction in England when *The Italian* was written and published, the directness and the consistency with which it assails the institutions of the old regime are remarkable—what we might sooner expect from such acknowledged gothicizing reformists as Wollstonecraft or Charlotte Smith. Some of the radical import of Radcliffe's plot is defused by the distancing effect of the prefatory section, which states that the ensuing novel was given to an unnamed English traveler curious about what he sees in Italy: the inviolability of even murderous confessions, the practice of charity to assassins who have sought asylum within a church, and the passionate excess of the Italian character (note how the Englishman bows gravely when his Italian companion observes that "if we were to shew no mercy to such unfortunate persons, assassinations are so frequent, that our cities would be half depopulated" [I 2–3]). National and religious difference thus functions in *The Italian* much as historical difference did in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*—both to establish a safely removed context in which to represent civil disorder without coming too close to home and to give a shape to anxieties that are felt precisely because civil disorder already is close to home.

At the same time, however, the unwonted specificity of Radcliffe's dating in the opening section indicates that distance could hardly have been her main or her only design. Most of the events narrated in the novel occur in 1758 and the manuscript is passed on to the Englishman in 1764, altogether less than forty years before its publication as *The Italian* in 1797. The novel, in other words, is not only Radcliffe's least remote temporally, but it is also recognizable as downright "modern." The terms in which Vivaldi and his family debate the competing claims of family duty and individual happiness, prejudice and reason, are drawn from the polemics of revolution and reaction. Vivaldi's determination to "defend the oppressed" and to place the "duty of humanity" and the "grandeur of a principle" (I 30) abstractly speaking before the more local obligations to "a father" and "family" (I 30), like Ellena's complaints about "visionary prejudice" and "unreasonable pride of birth!" (I 26), have a clearly progressive ring, and employ language even more politicized than, say, Hippolitus's similar exhortation in the early *A Sicilian Romance* (1790): "Fly from the authority of a father who abuses his power, and assert the liberty of choice, which nature assigned to you."[13] Conversely, a little later the political thrust wrenches back towards the conservative when the Marchesa scoffingly describes her husband's "common" decency as mere "prejudices" (I 172). In any case, the central conflicts of the

novel are described in such a way as to reverse the distancing effects of setting and to make this "Italian" tale decidedly English and contemporary.

Thus, unlike Monk Lewis, who (much to Coleridge's horror) flaunts the "M.P." after his name but places his novel in the brazenly fantastic Madrid of the Spanish Inquisition, the famously staid and retiring Radcliffe spends more time approximating rather than distancing the gothicism of her plot, going out of her way to incorporate highly politicized topoi. Perhaps the most conspicuous of these relates to stripping. *The Italian* is marked not simply by a pervasive use of veil imagery, as several scholars have variously and persuasively demonstrated,[14] but also and more particularly by recurrent gestures of unveiling and exposure which work in intertextual counterpoint to Burke's *Reflections*. With his apology for "politic, well-wrought veil[s]" (RRF 69) that conceal too harsh truths, his anxiety to clothe our shivering human nature in decent "drapery" (RRF 128), and his appeals to gallantry on behalf both of a naked queen and of a state denuded of its dignifying customs, Burke works a sentimental transformation upon the familiar, largely salutary satiric activity of unmasking in the interests of truth.[15] Having feminized the institutions, customs, and leaders of the state by figuring them as nakedly vulnerable, Burke links stripping with unbounded aggressivity against the weak, an activity which leads not to the dis-covery of abstract truth but rather to the generation of atrocity. But in *The Italian*, decent people are those who commendably rebel against courtly culture, which has misappropriated the moral authority of the church, and which has perversely made the good guys seem criminal and heretical. The novel arraigns this abuse of power not so much by interrogating Burkean sentimentality as by deploying a preemptive and critical version of sentimentality designed to strip power of its decent-seeming garb.

In Radcliffe's hands, the aggressive violation of true sentiment, particularly towards women, is exclusively the vice of the ruling class, while gallantry and the morality it promotes are linked to the men of feeling who resist the established institutions of family, church, and law. The Marchese, after all, is a figure not only of paternal authority in the private sphere, but also of the privilege of class and political power—in addition to being a "nobleman of one of the most ancient families of the kingdom," the Marchese is "a favourite possessing an uncommon share of influence at Court" (I 7). It is this Marchese himself who is guilty of irreverently stripping a woman, for in vowing to "exert [his] authority, and tear the veil from [Vivaldi's] eyes" (I 29), he is really exposing Ellena to degrading sexual innuendo, first by regarding her as a whore, and second by seeking out and crediting trumped-up charges about her motives for attaching Vivaldi. When Vivaldi gallantly places his love for a woman of (apparently) obscure birth before the interests of wealth and family, the Marchese rebukes his ardent son for his "chivalric" (I 30) air, much as the abbot at San Stefano taunts

Vivaldi for being "a knight of chivalry" (I 122) when he refuses to consider worldly "power" as "the infallible test of justice" (I 121).

In thus deriving its principles of virtue from heteroerotic sentiments which aristocratic manners have perverted or suppressed, *The Italian* draws on Radcliffe's previous novels, *The Romance of the Forest* in particular; but it also, thanks to the intervention of *The Monk*, significantly departs from them. Evidently unnerved by Lewis's gleeful divorce of sex from morality throughout *The Monk*—where arousal has no connection to moral feeling, but, on the contrary, is sharpened by the consciousness of its transgressions against youth, beauty, and innocence—Radcliffe idealizes sentimental masculinity and underscores its moral efficacy as she never had before.[16] From the very start, Vivaldi's sensitivity to Ellena's veiled beauty benevolizes his desire, making him "embarrassed by a respectful timidity, that mingled with his admiration" (I 5); and when the Marchese casts aspersions upon Ellena's character, Vivaldi's "tears of tenderness" mingle "with those of indignation" (I 29), and redouble his loyalty towards her. Unlike the tearful Valancourt in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, who philanders when Emily is not around, or the fervent Theodore in *The Romance of the Forest*, who is incapacitated beyond the possibility of resistance, Vivaldi is as unswerving and loyal as he is sensitive and impetuous. Affectivity in his case is self-disciplining; rather than overpowering him, it makes him more of a man. True: he too ends up imprisoned and immobilized. But it takes the machinations of the demoniac Schedoni working in conjunction with the apparatus of a police state to overcome the protection he gallantly affords Ellena. And once Vivaldi is jailed by the Inquisition, his meditation upon Ellena's distress (since he believes that she is being interrogated and tortured there) strengthens rather than confounds him—"His passions, thus restrained, seemed to become virtues, and to display themselves in the energy of his courage and his fortitude" (I 198)—conducing to his persuasiveness before the Inquisitors, and thus finally to the happy resolution of the plot.

While Radcliffe associates this violent stripping of women and this hostility to tender notions about them with the heinous corruption of the ruling class, she depicts the converse unmasking of the figureheads of power, on the other hand, as heroic. "I will strip you of the holy hypocrisy in which you shroud yourself" (I 104), Vivaldi shouts at the villainous monk, Schedoni, and much to our satisfaction too, because we know for sure, as Vivaldi does not, that Schedoni and the Marchesa plot Ellena's abduction, her incarceration in a convent, and finally her murder. In a world where the guilty and the innocent alike seem to drop out of sight only to surface later in ecclesiastical garments cloaking their identity and suppressing their history, cowls and veils are often literal stratagems of concealment, and the unraveling of the plot in its simplest sense entails removing these shrouds and identifying at long last who the persons beneath them really are.

Most of the stripping in *The Italian* is devoted to demystifying power, to removing the veil—or, more precisely, the cowl—from the face of masculine or masculinized authority bent on atrocity. The principal object of this scrutinizing exposure, of course, is the grimly villainous Schedoni, the bad "father"—in the ecclesiastical as well as familial sense (though, once again, a belated plot twist renders him uncle instead)—whose crimes and machinations are the mainsprings of the novel. Like Montoni, who regards Count Morano's sensibility to women's charms as feminizing, Schedoni views Vivaldi's ardor and his superstitiousness as a failure of manhood, dismissing him as "a rash boy, who was swayed only by his passions" (I 52). Likewise, Schedoni matches Montoni's scorn for Madame Montoni with his own even more explicitly generalized disdain of the femaleness the Marchesa exhibits when the sound of a distant requiem gives her second, squeamish thoughts about their plan to murder a fellow creature.

But in part because the novel idealizes sentimental masculinity, Schedoni (unlike Montoni) is never permitted to have any attractions as an alternative, antisentimental formation of masculinity. Whereas Montoni's ferociously antisentimental manhood in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* verges on the martial sublime and is endowed with a seductive potency that imparts tension to the novel to the direct degree that it overshadows the "good" father (St. Aubert) and the good hero (Valancourt), Schedoni is from the first denied any comparable allure. If anything, his talent for "subtlety" in argument, his penchant for "artificial perplexities," and his mental habits of "wily cunning" and "intricacy" (I 34) all imply a restraint and indirection that run counter to the boldness and amplitude associated with the sublime. His form "uncouth" (I 34), his complexion marked by "livid paleness" (I 35) and his demeanor by "gloom and austerity," Schedoni is a desiccated and sepulchral figure, akin to the skeletal ruins of Rome that sicken Vivaldi. As such, he arouses dismal curiosity about the narrative inscribed by the hideous lines of his own face, but he is never regarded as awesome or hypnotically compelling by anyone in the novel. Even the Marchesa—who needs him to do the dirty work of eliminating Ellena, just as he needs her to advance him to a profitable benefice—sees through the veil of specious reasoning he uses to conceal Ellena's murder: "The sophistry of the Confessor, together with the inconsistencies which he had betrayed . . . had not escaped the notice of the Marchesa, even at the time they were uttered" (I 174). Finally, although Radcliffe conceives of the aborted murder scene in Ellena's cell as chilling and moving—Schedoni raises his "dagger" (I 234) to penetrate/murder the sleeping girl only to recognize her at last as his own daughter—it is a little hard not to laugh outright at the scene that lands him in her cell to begin with. Spalatro and Schedoni appear as a sort of grisly Abbot and Costello, quarreling testily about who will do the deed, each too macho to admit his terror, and each obviously afraid of his own shadow (You go first; no, *you* go first). Clearly, *The Italian*

does more than strip the mask of "holy hypocrisy" (I 104) from the face of Schedoni's power. In fairly transparent opposition to Lewis's gothic, which inflates Ambrosio by its own hyperbole and thus both enjoys and colludes in the Promethean grossness of his crimes, Radcliffe's more muted representation of atrocious power—so often dismissed as emerging from bourgeois prudishness about sex—precludes such proto-Byronic reading by banalizing power, exposing the meretriciousness of its motives, and diminishing its sway by refusing its mystique.

Obviously, stripping power of its moral authority and its sentimental leverage of awe, terror, or even envy is a crypto-revolutionary gesture, and if Radcliffe's representations of the paternal and religious authority in Schedoni's case are unequivocally demystifying, elsewhere they are more chequered. In marked contrast to Radcliffe's previous novels, *The Italian* presents us with no exemplar of sentimental paternity, no St. Aubert or La Luc, figures who rule by endearment rather than by command. The Marchese is a conventionally tyrannical and obstructive *senex*—reminiscent of old Delvile in Burney's *Cecilia,* another marginal figurehead overshadowed by a more virile wife. Vivaldi gives us a lesson in the efficacy of sentimental policy by "entreating" rather than "*commanding*" (I 358) the unruly Paulo to be quiet in front of the Inquisitors. The Marchese's high-handed mode of rule is exposed as inferior when he fails to persuade Vivaldi to renounce Ellena precisely because he uses "menaces and accusations" rather than "kindness and gentle remonstrance," thus firing his son's "spirit and indignation" rather than awakening his "filial affection" (I 40). Moreover, the Marchese continues to oppose the marriage of Vivaldi and Ellena long after the Marchesa has died confessing her abominable crimes against Ellena, relinquishing his own aspersions upon her character tardily and with poor grace, and relenting only upon the discovery of Ellena's pristine parentage.

Despite these palpable hits, *The Italian* shelters the Marchese from irrecoverable opprobrium. In his wife's words, he has "prejudices"—a loaded word in the lexicon of the 1790s—in favor of "common rules of morality," which is to say that he has qualms about kidnapping and murder (I 172) that make him draw back from underhanded and criminal activity. An authoritarian but not a monster, the Marchese opposes "dark policy" (I 112) and as a result the Marchesa and Schedoni never let him in on their conspiracy. Furthermore, the severity of his paternal demeanor is allowed to give way to "parental anxiety and affection" (I 112) when his son disappears, thus revealing him to be a caring father after all, suffering "a tumult of mind inferior only to his son's" (I 112). Radcliffe thus works very hard to withhold from her plot any radical implications. Endeavoring to keep decent drapery upon the body of the old regime, she insists that "his pride of birth" was mingled with "the justifiable pride of a principled mind" which "governed his conduct in morals as well as in the jealousy of ceremonial distinc-

tions" (I 7). Not surprisingly, this insistence is riven with a serious inconsistency to which Radcliffe does not appear to call our attention: on one hand the honorable if aristocratic Marchese disdains the sneaky "dark policy" advocated by his wife, but on the other he hires spies to follow his son and dig up dirt on Ellena. Such evidently uncalculated contradiction indicates Radcliffe's deference to the underlying ideological imperative to spare him and the order he represents from the taint of atrocity.

Radcliffe's earlier novels meet this imperative either by positing a good father and a bad father, such as St. Aubert and Montoni in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* or (which amounts to the same thing) by disclosing at the last possible minute that the bad father is really "only" an uncle who murdered and replaced the good father years before, as with the Marquis de Montalt in *The Romance of the Forest* or, indeed, as with Schedoni himself. In the case of Vivaldi's father, however, paternal authority and the privilege of class it serves are both unmasked as remorseless and preserved as moral by diverting the responsibility for atrocity and thus the animus of the plot from the Marchese to the Marchesa. In good families, fathers like La Luc and St. Aubert take over the maternal position. But in *The Italian,* where Radcliffe is castigating the bad (aristocratic) family, the mother takes on the onus of paternal harshness and embodies the vices of her class. The Marchese and the Marchesa are nominally indistinguishable until the last letter, and that letter is at one and the same time the mark of gender and degradation which makes *his* eventual rehabilitation possible. Both parents come from "ancient" families, both are "jealous" of rank and ceremonial distinctions, and both are proud, but these qualities are all debased in the feminine inflection, carrying as it does the taint of weakness and excess. His "pride" is (ostensibly) "governed" by a "principled mind" (*he* would never plot murder!), while hers is the plaything of "violent passions" that are not regulated by "morals." Accordingly while he is allowed to be "elevated," she is merely "haughty" (I 7).

The Marchesa's characterization thus bears the marks of the peculiar misogyny unleashed by the (only) apparently woman-loving ethos of male sentimentality itself, which made femininity equivocal in potentially monstrous ways. We shall examine this misogyny at length in our discussion of Burney's *The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties.* Denied the "fondness of a mother" (I 8) from her undisciplined passion for family honor, the Marchesa is both too feminine and not feminine enough. By now, this problem is painfully familiar. What is different in *The Italian* is that the Marchesa is never permitted to be attractive in the equivocality she exemplifies. The perturbance of gender caused by male sentimentality was volatile, surprising, and sometimes impressive in Radcliffe's earlier fiction: Adeline evinced a masculine power of initiative; not only Emily but also Madame Montoni displayed formidable energy and self-command. But the Marchesa is always damned for her typical feminine weakness on the one hand, and her (simul-

taneously transgressive and inept) efforts at masculinity on the other; and because she is present as a scapegoat for the ruling class rather than a casualty of it, this incoherence is never quarried. In her depictions of female power in *The Wanderer,* Burney would re-genre Radcliffe's Marchesa, but retain the vituperatively misogynist (il)logic of the Marchesa's gender transgression.

Consider, for example, how the Marchesa's queasiness about murder is prevented from ever attaining the dignity of moral sentiment. Schedoni incites her criminal designs first by flattering her superiority to the femininity he despises (he compliments her for possessing "man's spirit, and his clear perceptions" [I 168]), and then by deprecating her manhood (he hints that she is too cowardly to commit murder and that she rationalizes her cowardice by thinking that "virtue bade [Ellena] live, when it was only fear" [I 168]). Having earlier pledged to "lose the mother in the strict severity of the judge" (I 111), the Marchesa commits herself to an antisentimental ethic by preferring the unbending impartiality of masculine justice to the tenderness, susceptibility, and, by implication, principlelessness of femininity. As sentimental readers, we are supposed to reverse this order of priority, and to abhor her and Schedoni for hardening themselves to maternal sympathy. As a result, when the Marchesa balks at their project, confessing that "some woman's weakness still lingers at my heart" (I 169), we are glad to discover that she can still feel the promptings of tenderness; and when Schedoni reproves her for having "a woman's heart" (I 177), we know that Ellena can only hope to live so long as the Marchesa's womanly heart keeps beating. Observing her agitation upon overhearing a distant requiem, Schedoni delivers himself of a diatribe on woman's weakness which thus only accomplishes the converse exaltation of female responsiveness to humanizing sensations:

> "Behold, what is woman!" said he—"The slave of her passions, the dupe of her senses! When pride and revenge speak in her breast, she defies obstacles, and laughs at crimes! Assail but her senses, let music, for instance, touch some feeble chord of her heart, and echo to her fancy, and lo! all her perceptions change:—she shrinks from the act she had but an instant before believed meritorious, yields to some new emotions, and sinks—the victim of a sound! O, weak and contemptible being!" (I 177–78)

Schedoni's perverse judgment notwithstanding, the Marchesa's best moments occur only when she is in the grip of such sensations, and it is entirely to her credit that she, unlike Schedoni himself, be swept away by them. But, as if anxious lest feminine passionateness acquire too much prestige, the narrator finally does not permit us to invert Schedoni's meaning, but instead turns around abruptly and incongruously to endorse the logic of his misogyny: "The Marchesa, at least, seemed to justify his observations. The

desperate passions, which had resisted every remonstrance of reason and humanity, were vanquished only by other passions" (I 178).

Alternately taxed for feeling too little and for feeling too much, for inhumane rigor and for lack of firmness, the Marchesa is mere woman after all, and she has even less dignity than Schedoni precisely because, unable to control herself, she is—and ought to be—controlled by others. However, in a novel which exposes the unnatural alliance between the aristocracy and the altar by attacking their female representatives, the insistence on this need to regulate domineering women has the effect of reinstating the authoritarian, antisentimental ethos which had been the problem to begin with. This call for the nonsentimental domination of women is apparent in the depiction of the convent at San Stefano. As we have already seen, convents are suspect places in sentimental literature because of their independence from the structures of heterosexual affectivity; but in *The Italian* the convent is even more ignominious as an arena for female rule unsupervised by men. Abducting Ellena to such a convent, the Marchesa persecutes Ellena in all the fury of her "prejudice and pride" (I 122) with the help of a well-born abbess who "believed that of all possible crimes, next to that of sacrilege, offenses against persons of rank were least pardonable" (I 67), and who protects the prerogatives of rank by forcing religious or marital vows, by incarceration in "chains and darkness" (I 126), or by "instruments of torture" (I 127). Appalled by the patent injustice and harshness of the Abbess's power, Vivaldi urges the "*padre-Abate*" (I 124) to "exert some authority" (I 121) over the Abbess on Ellena's behalf, only to find that this man's sentimental virtues—"mildness of temper" and "gentleness of manner" (I 120)—incline him towards "timidity" (I 121) before the authority of the Abbess. The Abbot, in short, is not man enough to stand up to the Abbess and to provide her with the discipline she cannot provide herself. One general effect of this withering characterization of the Abbot is to desensationalize atrocity, and while this makes *The Italian* tamer than *The Monk* in some ways, it makes it sharper in others, tracing the root of institutionalized evil to easygoing, sentimental bureaucrats who recognize injustice, shake their heads, and profess that it "does not come within my jurisdiction" (I 121). But, considered more specifically as an object lesson in the insufficiency of male sentimentality, with its culpable failure to overrule female domination in "domestic concerns" (I 121), the Abbot signals a need for the resurgence of nonsentimental masculinity.

Nowhere is this resurgence more troubling than in Radcliffe's representation of the Italian Inquisition. All of the fearsome hypermasculine grandeur that Schedoni does *not* purvey, the Inquisition *does*. And what makes *The Italian* peculiar is that this grandeur is not deflated or renounced in the interests of sentimental propriety—as Montoni's is, for instance—but rather is shorn up and vindicated, which makes for dizzying ideological incongruity.

Radcliffe's description of the inquisitorial chamber is clearly based on an illustration drawn from the memory of one of its prisoners, and since depicting the Inquisition was forbidden, some of Radcliffe's episodes stand as a thrilling "inside view" of an institution shrouded in secrecy.[17] As such, they, like those devoted to the convent at San Stefano, strip away the veils of mystery that separate us from the infamous truth.[18] But whereas the convent, divested of its specious holiness, is exposed as repulsively banal—Ellena, for example, recoils from the nuns' bad table manners as well as from the grotesque persistence of their personal vanity—the Inquisition epitomizes more potent horror, and as a result is not comparably diminished or degraded. For Vivaldi, speaking from the point of view of enlightenment progressivism, the Inquisition poses the problem of atrocity and the *ancien régime* writ large, for the torture practiced under its auspices is rationalized as just and sensible despite its logical absurdity, to say nothing of its cruelty. Overhearing "half-stifled groans, as of a person in agony" and sundry "indistinct sounds, which yet appeared to Vivaldi like lamentations and extorted groans" (I 197), Vivaldi moralizes on this abuse of the "prerogative of reason" and the "sense of justice," denouncing "the frenzied wickedness of [the] man" who, "even at the moment of infliction, insults his victim with assertions of the justice and necessity of such procedure" (I 198). When an Inquisitor explains that "the torture is applied to those, who have the folly and the obstinacy to withhold the truth" (I 203), Vivaldi gives him a piece of his very rational mind: "It is not the truth, which you seek; it is not the guilty, whom you punish; the innocent, having no crimes to confess, are the victims of your cruelty, or, to escape from it, become criminal, and proclaim a lie" (I 203). Animated by his author's protestant paranoia about the secret machinations of Catholic hierarchies, Vivaldi from the very first considers the "visages" of the Inquisitors busy about their "work of horror" to be "stamped with the characters of demons" (I 197), and when they refuse to disclose the name of his accuser, send a spy to share his cell, and see to it that Vivaldi gets an earful of the "doleful sounds" (I 306) of torture victims, his impression seems right.[19]

But *The Italian* does not, in fact, endorse this judgment, and Vivaldi himself explicitly retracts it. The penetration and strictness of these mysteriously cowled figures putting the stupid good nature of the abbot at San Stefano to shame, the tribunal is morally efficacious after all, and the Inquisitors themselves are committed agents of justice who are scrupulous in the exertion of their authority, earnest in the pursuit of truth, and are even willing to submit to their own uncowling (at Vivaldi's request) in order to reach it. Once Schedoni is implicated in fratricide and incestuous rape, the tribunal sifts through testimony with painstaking impartiality, paying particular care to consider the motives informers might have to distort evidence, and to establish with certainty that the Count Marinella of decades ago and the

Schedoni of today are one and the same person. Vivaldi marvels at this meticulous "candour" (I 351). Indeed, as he gazes upon a "just judge," tears fall fast on his cheek and he blubbers to himself, "Can such glorious candour appear amidst the tribunal of an Inquisition! . . . An inquisitor! . . . An inquisitor!" (I 353). Such astonishment appears to say more about the unfairness of his initial impressions about the Inquisition than about the anomalousness of a just inquisitor. This "just judge" is, after all, the grand vicar, and his authority duly checks the excesses of his less forbearing and scrupulous fellows.

As distinct from the Inquisition in *The Monk*, which is crooked as well as cruel, and indeed which would have reprieved Ambrosio at the last minute, the Inquisition in *The Italian* changes from a theater of horror into a theater of justice. Reproducing the same denial-driven process of forgetting which Vivaldi and Ellena evince when the landscape forces them to confront atrocity, the conclusion (re)buries everything the novel had earlier uncovered: just as Ellena represses her unthinkable suspicions about her "father" Schedoni by deflecting them onto Spalatro, Vivaldi commends the candor of inquisitorial fathers and never gives a second thought to the extorted groans he heard behind closed doors. The confidence Vivaldi had earlier felt in his own capacity to withstand interrogation—"It was scarcely possible for his words to be tortured into a self-accusation" (I 202)—implicitly absolves inquisitorial procedure in general from the charge of atrocity: if only guilty "words" can and will be "tortured" into self-accusation, then only guilty bodies can be tortured as well. We need not fret about injustice because guilty bodies deserve the punishment they've got coming to them. As it turns out, then, far from being posited as the basis of all amiable virtue and hence, for that very reason, as prone to appropriation by sentimental men, maternal fondness ought to give way to the strict severity of paternal judges.

The Italian had seemed implicitly progressive in its stereotypical association of atrocity with the old regime, and in its exaltation of a progressive strand of sentimentalism, where feelings uncorrupted by worldly interest were held to be the basis for ethical behavior, and where heteroerotic affectivity in particular was celebrated as benevolizing. As such *The Italian* is akin to the early, Rousseauvean *Romance of the Forest*. But after the intervention of the Terror and reaction, this plot must be hedged and retracted, embedded as it is in revolutionary rhetoric and implication. Sensitivity is recontained by authoritarian rigor, and the established institutions of Church (the Inquisition) and State (the Marchese), having first been stripped of their moral authority, are reclothed, remystified. True, Vivaldi strips the cowls from the Inquisitors; but it is truer still that the cowls are donned again. To some extent, this rehabilitation is formal, and as such consistent with *The Romance of the Forest* as well as with *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, whose con-

clusions likewise rewrite the foregoing narrative: in the former, a nonsentimental court of law prosecutes the Marquis, and Adeline's real father is discovered; in the latter, Emily's subversive anxieties about masculine authority are dismissed as illusions, and sentimental domesticity is reconstituted. But *The Italian* is different because the project of rehabilitation is committed rather than perfunctory, and the resulting burden of contradiction is as a result more massive and troubling. Not an obtrusively conventional eleventh-hour closural device of the sort imitated in *Northanger Abbey* (comprising no more than a few pages, and hence easy to disregard), the process of forestalling social criticism and restoring the drapery of decency to the figureheads of order here takes up an entire volume, and even so does not completely work.

The principal casualty of the novel's reinvestment in nonsentimental masculinity is Ellena. Cleansed from the slightest trace of equivocality, Ellena is the most classically feminine of Radcliffe's heroines, a model of passive fortitude enduring the action of others upon her rather than initiating her own. Unlike Adeline, she is never called upon to jump out of windows or scout for intruders; and though she is, like Emily, mindful of her dignity, unlike her she represses rather than indulges suspicions, dons rather than penetrates veils. Time and time again, she is brought to ethical impasse, but very little tension attaches to her recurrent quandary: should she accept Vivaldi's proposals despite the opposition of his family? Considering that the Vivaldi family had plotted her abduction, her incarceration, her enforced celibacy, and her assassination, Ellena's decision comes with remarkable ease. One look at Vivaldi's tear-stained face, and she cedes her dignity to his love. Indeed, when Vivaldi declares himself "torture[d]" by her avowal of "warmest gratitude" (I 152), she gives him the even warmer love he implores rather than become a torturer herself. Clearly, insofar as *The Italian* recuperates male authority, it cannot tell Ellena's story. Her behavior, her subjectivity, and her suffering are peripheral. Cast as the object rather than the subject of *their* plots of harm and rescue, Ellena bears significance only for how other characters respond to her rather than for how or what she does herself. Forced to the altar in order to pronounce her final religious vows against her will, Ellena "solemnly" utters the words "I protest" (I 119). As if the vindication of masculine authority and the airing of female complaints were mutually exclusive, this "protest" is as buried by the novel as are the defiant members of "the sisterhood" within "the deepest recesses" (I 1260) of the convent itself.

The one important challenge to this hegemony of masculinity is the relationship between Ellena and Olivia, and the priority of female homoerotic attachment it implies. If *The Italian* on one hand ratifies male authority—over other men, of course, but especially over women—on the other it conspicuously omits portraying heterosexual domesticity: the Marchese is

almost never at home, and one looks in vain for a La Vallée or a Chateau-le-Blanc, or for the equivalent of the La Luc household at Leloncourt. Over and against the dominant movement of the plot, which figures female passion as intemperate and amoral, another less-pronounced but still quite visible strand of the plot figures *male* desire as importunate and disruptive. Like Schedoni/Count Marinella, who started the plot rolling years ago when he murdered his elder brother to possess his wealth and his wife, even the chaste Vivaldi intrudes on the female household where Ellena and Bianchi live contentedly without him. In contrast to *The Monk*—where the presumed avidity of female heterosexual appetite is such a threat to men—*The Italian* starts with the given of female homosociality. And as Susan Greenfield has shown, when Ellena confesses her love for Vivaldi, she retreats behind her veil, accepting him only on Bianchi's urging, and then only as a surrogate for her. Once at San Stefano, the romantic plot is indeed recapitulated, detail for detail, but with the fervidly homoerotic content which had already been foreshadowed by the *Twelfth Night* epigraph for chapter 2. Just as the sound of Ellena's "voice" singing in church had compelled Vivaldi's "attention" and prompted him to try to gaze rapturously at the face "concealed in her veil" (I 5), so too does the "voice" of Olivia fix Ellena's "attention" and stir her to a highly eroticized "fascinat[ion]" about the face behind the veil (I 86–87). For her part, Olivia gazes at Ellena, blushes, blanches, and is overcome with "such universal languor as precedes a fainting fit" (I 91). The erotic intensity of this affect between women unveiling themselves to each other so clearly surpasses what Ellena more gingerly ventures for Vivaldi himself that it is no wonder the young man feels uneasy upon discovering Olivia's ascendancy: "Do I then hold only the second place in your heart?" (I 135), he asks peevishly, "disengag[ing] her from the nun" (I 135), and plainly expressing his "envy" and "jealous[y]" (I 136) of Olivia's power to excite such "tenderness" in Ellena.[20] True, this intimacy, which momentarily threatens to overturn the heterosexual plot altogether by privileging erotic sisterhood, is finally reabsorbed into the heterosexual economy: once Olivia is identified as Ellena's long-lost mother, her importance subsides. But in a novel where fond "mothers" give way to stern judges, this emergence of the mother as the basis for sentimental community is exceptional, for sentimental domesticity is elsewhere invariably paternal in its structure. Dominated by a mannishly hard-hearted abbess who (absurdly) struts in "pontifical robes, with the mitre on her head" (I 117), the convent at San Stefano is no haven of sisterhood.[21] But the modern, somewhat ludicrously protestantized convent of Our Lady of Pity is such a haven. Described repeatedly as a "family" of which the mild but firm Abbess, "loved . . . as a mother, rather than feared her as a judge" (I 300), is clearly the head, this fatherless household consisting solely of women is the only domestic idyl proffered in the novel, and it is a haven from the atrocity rife elsewhere precisely because of its independence

from and exclusion of the world of men and the structures of patriarchal society.

Caught up in the disfiguring exacerbations of gender that followed in the wake of the political upheaval of the 1790s, Radcliffe's fiction, like that of Wollstonecraft and Burney, increasingly turns to the alternative of homoerotic relations, and to the sorts of attachments which, predating the normativizing discourse of heterosexuality/homosexuality, provide heroines the respite of free space, where their own affectivity can for once be indulged and enjoyed without fear or pain. Impelled not only by political radicalism and attendant theories of gender but also by Radcliffe's own example in *The Italian,* a novel she warmly admired, Wollstonecraft pushes her gothic *Wrongs of Woman* beyond the romantic plot and represents a same-sex parental couple. No radical, Radcliffe fantasizes idyls of feminine sentimentality only as temporary interruptions in the ideologically mandated love plot. Still, in *The Italian,* as in all Radcliffe's novels, the resolution of the conventional plot into felicity requires a plethora of last-minute adjustments too strained to stand up to scrutiny: it is hard, for example, to believe that Bianchi would have a miniature of Schedoni's portrait if he were not Ellena's father, and almost impossible to figure out when and how Ellena herself could have been born at all given the disparate and discordant narrative fragments with which we are supposed to reconstruct the crimes of eighteen years before.

The Italian has been so inauspicious and bleak that it requires not one but two endings to establish an epithalamium, the second serving as a sort of coda which labors to bring the whole novel around to the tonic major. Can it be fortuitous that the narrator makes not even a perfunctory attempt to inspire any credence in the heterosexual love plot? Concerning Ellena's postnuptial fête near Naples, the narrator wryly observes, "It was, in truth, a scene of fairy land" (I 412). The only landscape that doesn't bear traces of atrocity, it would appear, is the purely imaginary landscape of fairyland itself. For the landscape of Italy will continue to rise up with its reminders of historical and personal atrocity, and its volcanoes, surging with the repressed power of the underclass and of women, will continue to rumble ominously and threaten the world of masculine law—sentimental and nonsentimental alike—which cannot contain it. And finally, where sentimentality survives unscathed, it can only be used to describe Paulo's passionate devotion to his master, and even this lapses into effusive absurdity. As Paulo himself jabbers on the final page, "Who can stop, at such a time as this, to think about what he means!" (I 415).

It is tempting to see in Paulo's bravado of ecstatic inanity a variation on Radcliffe's own celebration of a happy and well-ordered world at the expense of her plots' own meanings. Stopping inexplicably at the height of her career, she would never publish again. The long silence between *The Italian* (1797) and *Gaston de Blondeville, or the Court of Henry III Keeping*

Festival in Ardenne, composed in 1802 and published in 1826 (three years after Radcliffe died) will always remain Radcliffe's most impenetrable mystery. To judge from *Gaston de Blondeville,* Radcliffe seems to have wished to avoid the contradictions that derail *The Italian* by turning to the relative sluggishness of historical narrative, pushing her setting back to the thirteenth century, and by letting blatantly supernatural agencies, which save the day, remain unrationalized. But even *Gaston de Blondeville,* with its echoes of *Caleb Williams,* treads on politically dangerous ground. If Radcliffe's gothic novels opened creaky doors onto atrocity that had to be slammed shut, and if sentimentality only served to redouble that atrocity and forfeit mothers to judges, then Radcliffe finally preferred to remain silent rather than to indulge any more in the buffoonery of disclaimer.

Frances Burney

Statues, Idiots, Automatons: Camilla

Frances Burney's heroines have a passion for abjection. Their careers evince it with an extravagance at once grotesque and festive. At times, their suffering is nuanced enough to be a credit to sensibility. When they blush with exquisitely intense embarrassment over *faux pas* and *contretemps*—take Evelina's evolving sensitivity to the manners of high life, for example—they show that their affective lives are perfectly calibrated to the social practices of their culture, practices whose worldliness, venerated by the "ton," seems to call for the sophistication the English associate with the French. More often, however, their affliction burgeons beyond all seemly proportions, as when Cecilia loses her mind and grovels deliriously among clumps of straw; or as when Camilla—convinced that her father has been imprisoned, her uncle pauperized, and his estate closed up, and all, *all* because of her—does not merely retreat to her bed, but actually "crawl[s]" (C 867) there, expecting never to rise again. What differentiates such exorbitant affliction from that of other eighteenth-century heroines—no slouches when it comes to suffering—is that it is not protested. Clarissa dies underscoring woman's duty to "BEAR AND FORBEAR," to be sure, but she never surrenders the moral confidence that makes friends love and persecutors quail before her: the severity of her father, the weakness of her mother, the acquisitiveness of her brother, and the jealousy of her sister should not be. In a similar way, gothic heroines are often feisty in the midst of their suffering. The extremity of their hardship not only licenses but requires them to defy their tormentors. Careful as she is to distinguish herself from Madame Montoni, a great complainer, Emily St. Aubert sounds a bit like Wollstonecraft herself when she pleads her "rights" against Montoni, and she is even willing (as Clarissa is not) to entertain the idea of litigation.

But Burney's heroines, far from protesting their wretchedness, vindicate

its justice and embrace it with all the strenuousness of real commitment. This enthusiasm imparts that characteristically masochistic edge to her fiction, and her last two novels take such enthusiasm to the outer limits. The plots of the earlier *Evelina, or, A Young Woman's Entrance into the World* (1778) and *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress* (1782) lodge trenchant social criticisms, even if the heroines might demur: *Evelina* assails patriarchs who shirk the offices of paternity, and though the docile little daughter trembles before her father's dread power, the novel bearing her name brings him to her knees. Gradually stripped of all her patrimony as well as her memory, Cecilia is likewise a casualty of a patriarchal system which continues to be honored despite its decay, and which keeps its iron hold by erasing the names and squelching the identities of females such as herself. By contrast, the later *Camilla, or, a Picture of Youth* (1796) and *The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties* (1814) go to elaborate lengths to make sure that no damaging criticism falls on the hoary heads of men who are dear. In *The Wanderer*, Ellis/Juliet affirms the dignity of the "reverend, aged, infirm" (WFD 857) Bishop even though his paternal powerlessness is the precondition of her panoramic miseries. In *Camilla* as well, the Tyrold children suffer as a result of failures of paternal authority that are gross yet curiously unforegrounded: an extortionist and fraud, Lionel leeches from anyone he can, even pimping his sister to cover his debts; Eugenia is mangled by her uncle, from whose singularly inept hands she is easily abducted and forced into marriage; and finally, preyed upon by her brother and disastrously ill-advised by her father, Camilla has no idea how to anticipate or manage expenses in public places. Yet, unlike Burney's previous works, *Camilla* never encourages us to wonder how parents, clergymen, and baronets go wrong, but rather asks how children can be so bad as to disappoint persons so good. Consequently and bizarrely, no one in the novel is troubled by the insanely exaggerated sense of guilt that makes Camilla, whose debts are so modest, shoulder criminally intense responsibility for her family's ruin, while the massive depredations of Lionel and Clermont, legitimate heirs, receive scant mention.

Burney's later fiction forces her heroines into shoring up persons and institutions who cause their tribulations because it was composed amidst an intensely repressive period of political reaction. The reaction made it urgent to venerate the men of feeling who, as conservative ideologues would argue, ensured the durability of the social order by virtue of the sentimental sway—the eliciting of loyalty, gratitude, deference, solicitude, endearment—they exerted over subordinates. Coming at the end of a sentimental tradition which had been strategically deployed in order to redefine masculinity and re-form political subjects, Burney's later novels unfold amidst conditions that both promote and prohibit female suffering: having appropriated legitimate affectivity, male sentimentality throws female feeling, indeed female subjectivity itself, into doubt—as faked, frivolous, undutiful, wayward.[1] Engrafted

onto the unassailable patterns of Christian martyrdom, Clarissa's agony had been her glory, and her passive fortitude in face of injustice had demonstrated the grandeur of feminine heroism. But a character like Camilla must deny not only the injustice of her excruciation but also the fact of that excruciation itself. Pushed to the breaking point by Lionel's assumption that a brother's financial embarrassments take precedence over a sister's distress, she asks, "What can I ever say, to make you hear me, or feel for me?" (C 523). The extremity of her final harrowing is necessitated by the impossibility of answering that question. In this novel, "good" women are exhorted to self-control; nothing short of their evacuation by death or madness can both authenticate their suspect distress and exonerate them from the charge of shameful self-indulgence. From the depths of her misery, Camilla heads the note she has scrawled to Edgar with the portentous words, "*Not to be delivered till I am dead*" (C 870), because she realizes that only annihilation can make credible and pardonable her obtrusion into speech, absolve her from the bother her subjectivity has caused. The extraordinary abjection of Burney's last two heroines is thus both a result of and a response to the problem of femininity under the dispensation of male sentimentality.

Burney's late fiction is marked by an ambivalence that derives from the very privilege of her position as a novelist whose career developed in close association with the men who were then (as now) recognized to be at the forefront of English art, literature, and politics—men such as Reynolds, Johnson, Burke, Sheridan, Garrick, not to mention her father Charles.[2] At first, this filiation, a major preoccupation of Burney's life as well as her fiction, seemed protective. The young author of *Evelina* was careful not only to honor her father, the "author of [her] being," but also to clarify her relation or nonrelation to the other authors—Rousseau, Johnson, Marivaux, Fielding, Richardson, and Smollett—who made up the canonical tradition of prose fiction. With astonishing confidence considering the timidity often (with some justice) attributed to her, the then anonymous Burney imagines it possible to be sheltered by such forefathers—the title "novelist" cannot seem ignominious if she shares it with them—without being overborne by them: since they have not written about a young lady's "Entrance into the World," *Evelina* will not cover "the same ground which they have tracked," and their examples need not intimidate her.[3]

But such confidence would dissipate as Burney's success bound her to sustain her fame beneath an increasingly more exacting critical gaze, and as the very concept of authority itself became more vexed. Nowhere is this more painfully evident than in *Camilla*. Conceived amidst the turmoil of the 1790s and dedicated to the Queen of England, *Camilla* is haunted by crises of authority—paternal, political, and literary. This may seem a strange claim given the novel's studied reticence about matters political. Discussing *Camilla* with her royal acquaintances at Court, Burney returned Princess Sophia's

scandalized observation that "the Writers are all turned Democrats, they say" by assuring her—and evidently with complete sincerity—that "*Politics* were, *all ways,* left out" of her fiction because she believed that "they were not a *feminine* subject for discussion."[4] Even if we give Burney credit for not denouncing "Democrats," as the conversation seemed to invite—and as her father often did—her "feminine" claim to apoliticality contradicts the accomplishment of her last two novels and alerts us to her profound uneasiness about risking direct criticism. Burney's "*Directions for coughing, sneezing, or moving, before the King and Queen*" horribly if hilariously demonstrates that self-mutilating repression is the price one pays for the privilege of royal favor.[5] But although Burney's novels attest, as Julia Epstein has eloquently put it, to the "volcanic spillage" that is produced when "female desire is yoked to the service of social propriety," Burney never frontally challenges the system that required this of her.[6] The recent renaissance in Burney studies has tended sometimes to overstate Burney's confidence as a social critic, as if she were Wollstonecraft's ideological sister, whereas it seems to me that Burney is distinctive precisely for her retreat from the explicitly oppositional.

Burney appears to have wished not to recognize the critical character of her own fiction, but her "silence" about politics is still more apparent than real. Political crisis had already become so thoroughly intertextualized in the fiction of the 1790s that its presence need not be signaled by any polemical announcements.[7] In *Camilla,* the pressure which political reaction placed even upon loyal subjects is discernible in small but pervasive ways. Irked by his sister's disapproval of the impiety with which he has spoken of their uncle, Lionel scolds Camilla in a speech that would seem unremarkable if it weren't for the allusion with which it concludes: "Don't you know it's a relief to a man's mind to swear, and say a few cutting things when he's in a passion? when all the time he would no more do harm to the people he swears at, than you would, that mince out all your words as if you were talking treason, and thought every man a spy that heard you" (C 385). While Austen's Henry Tilney likes being surrounded by "a neighbourhood of voluntary spies," Lionel Tyrold resents eavesdroppers who would abrogate a man's right to vent his anger in speech. Their shared awareness of the antitreason acts of 1795 reminds us that the authority of the state was considered so shaky that subjects were monitored, that such surveillance was felt to reach intimately into neighborhood life, and that even sweet-tempered daughters and feckless sons felt obliged to watch what they said.[8] Relating Camilla's exacting internal as well as external monitor (Edgar) to the spies scattered around the neighborhood sniffing out those who do not revere authority as they ought, Lionel's asseveration helps us account for the intensity of Camilla's paranoia and the crippling guilt that she suffers over filial infractions which would not seem to warrant such a fuss if we regarded them as merely private.

Lionel's allusion tells us much about the political pressure under which

Camilla labors to be dutiful, but it also tells us much about how the same internal pressures dampened Burney's criticism. As her diaries show, people in high places read and discussed her work, and vetted its politics. Having lived at Court during the first years of the French Revolution, Burney could not regard treason as an abstraction.[9] But having married an émigré Constitutionalist, on the likes of whom her father was content to pin the worst excesses of the Terror, neither could she wholeheartedly countenance the vigorously repressive agendas of the reaction.[10] Her position vis-à-vis conservative deployments of sentimental ideology is of interest precisely because of the discomfort with which she endorses as well as resists it. Unlike Wollstonecraft and Radcliffe, Burney was an insider, and her career was very long—long enough in fact for her to have outlived the writers who had been brought up on her own *Evelina* and *Cecilia,* and Wollstonecraft and Radcliffe were surely among them. Burney shared their uneasiness about the masculinization of sentiment brought about in response to the French Revolution. But precisely because her place was so privileged, she could not launch her criticism from the same position they did, though her final two novels clearly do start where they left off. In the next chapter, I shall argue that *The Wanderer* refutes Wollstonecraft as Burney stunningly misread her in *The Wrongs of Woman. Camilla,* by contrast, rewrites Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho.* "Why should not I have my mystery, as well as Udolpho," Burney asked her father in a letter dated 18 June 1795.[11] Why indeed? Although she crafted *Camilla* into five "*Udolphoish* volumes," and depicted, as Margaret Doody has pointed out, Radcliffean characters who "approach death and guilt circuitously, working upon hypotheses, inferences, and clues," *Camilla* is actually an anti-*Udolpho.*[12] This is partly because, situated squarely within the authorized literary tradition, Burney cannot avail herself of subliterary generic strategies which enable the crises of the present to be projected backwards and defamiliarized, as Radcliffe did. But it is also, and more crucially, because Radcliffean gothic attempts initially at least to dignify female complaint, even though it is compelled finally to trivialize it retrospectively. In *Camilla,* the regime of male sentimentality is so strict that it extends to Camilla's unconscious, prohibiting her even from fantasizing exactly what sentimental ideology requires of her: the spectacle of her own suffering and disfigurement.

For this reason, Burney's social criticism in *Camilla* is decentered, conducted dramatically without narratorial commentary, and largely through what, given the novel's pervasive concern with the theatricality of gender, may not inappropriately be called stylistic drag. Sentimentality, of course, is normatively excessive. And in the world of Burney's imagination, the already excessive stranglehold of sentimental propriety can be loosened only by excessive compliance. This makes her fiction campy where it is most dutiful, for norms here are so saturated with excess that they lose their sway as norms.

Masquerading in a variety of authoritative discursive modes—for example, the sermon, the Johnsonian sentence, Shakespearean tragedy, classical learning, even dicta from conduct books—*Camilla* saturates them with disruptive surplus. Ringing disastrously false, the sermon aggravates Camilla's problems by encouraging concealment; Johnsonian parallelisms wobble, unable to contain their subjects; performed in dialects drawn from throughout the kingdom, the performance of *Othello* becomes a national travesty of male melodrama; classical learning and the virtue it underwrites, once the flower of civilized manhood, are here the domain of women; continually excoriating the ethereal Camilla with ponderous and clearly misplaced opprobria, conduct-book maxims get smothered by their own pomposity.

In part because of this densely textured irony, *Camilla* is Burney's most arduous novel. *Cecilia* is practically as long, variegated, and densely peopled, and yet because the course of action that divests the heroine of all her money and all her identity is at once so simple and so inexorable, the plot reads smoothly despite its multifariousness. Working by complicating accretion rather than progression, the narrative flow of *Camilla,* by contrast, is fitful, impeded, constantly breaking down. There was a time when critics chalked this unsteadiness up to bad writing, and the bad writing in turn up to any number of causes, such as stuffy didacticism, financial necessity, and the dreary exhaustion of advancing age, the stilting influence of Samuel Johnson.[13] But as Burney's own chapter heading "Offs and Ons" (IV.vii.ix) indicates, the novel's abrupt starts and halts are contrived according to the intricacy and inconsistency of what the prefatory paragraph announces to be its central subject: "the Heart of man" (C 7).

Somewhat in defiance of eighteenth-century usage, I read "Heart of man" here in all its gendered specificity. For even though the narrator talks in universal terms about the mazelike complexity of the "human heart" (C 7), virtually all of the maddening impactions of the ensuing chapters arise from the "contrarieties" of male sentiment—the "Heart of *man*" [my emphasis]—in particular. At the same time as male sentimentality has vitiated customary practices of authority—thus giving rise to the complications narrated throughout the novel—its excesses upset all indices of gender, casting women's various modes of femininity into radical doubt as histrionic, extreme, grotesque. A profoundly conflicted novel, *Camilla* suggests two responses to this disruption. On the one hand, it wants men to be men again so that women can be (women) too, not only vis-à-vis men but also, and even more importantly, vis-à-vis other women. Functioning beneath the conflicting disciplinary regimes of the clerical males—her father, Marchmont, Edgar—Camilla must be almost entirely emptied before she is accepted and loved, and both by the too sensitive man who has monitored her in an agony all along and by her severe mother, who cannot indulge maternal warmth until Camilla is half-dead. And yet, on the other hand, read with attention to

the peripheries, *Camilla* allows for the enjoyment of sentimental excess when it is not bounded by domesticity. Burney is the last major novelist to be at home with a courtly, ludic ethos of theatricality which, in privileging artificiality over artlessness, stylishness over sincerity, is in part the origin of camp.[14] The ease with which fops like Sir Sedley and grand ladies of fashion like Mrs. Arlbery indulge the *outré* can be liberating for her seemlier heroines. In these contexts, the sex and gender disruptions caused by sentimentality itself can prove thrilling for women—who to this day are not generally considered the principal beneficiaries of camp. Burney's fiction is utterly unique in representing this possibility, although it is wary about it as well.

Camilla begins by setting forth the gender disruptions which, as we have already seen, typify the practice of male sentimentality. Among the first things we learn about Camilla's parents in the opening chapter, "A Family Scene," is that stereotypes about affectivity have been systematically regendered. A tender susceptibility to feeling now distinguishes the moral authority of the father of the household:

> Mr. Tyrold, gentle with wisdom and benign in virtue, saw with compassion all imperfections but his own, and there doubled the severity which to others he spared. Yet the mildness that urged him to pity blinded him not to approve; his equity was unerring, though his judgment was indulgent. His partner had a firmness of mind which nothing could shake: calamity found her resolute; even prosperity was powerless to lull her duties asleep. The exalted character of her husband was the pride of her existence . . . . Mr. Tyrold revered while he softened the rigid virtues of his wife, who adored while she fortified the melting humanity of her husband. (C 8–9)

Here, while the once classically masculine virtues of severity, firmness, resolution, and fortitude fall to the sturdy wife, the good husband is "exalted" in his possession of virtues such as gentleness, compassion, mildness, indulgence, and softness. Such a reversal might appear empowering, or at the very least, dignifying for women. The stoic virtues Mrs. Tyrold practices—particularly her endeavor "to be superior to calamity" (C 838)—were profoundly attractive to late-century moralists, preeminently Samuel Johnson, even though these virtues were ultimately passed over in preference of the more amiable virtue Mr. Tyrold practices: "melting humanity." But in a world which privileges the sensitivity of men, anything bordering on stoic self-possession and indifference in a woman, far from being regarded as a virtue, is held in much suspicion. Mrs. Arlbery, for example, is judged by Edgar Mandlebert to be a dangerous companion for Camilla because she is "alone" and possesses "a decided superiority to all she saw, and a perfect indifference to what opinion she incurred in return" (C 73). Self-assurance, independence, reliance upon one's own judgment—these may sometimes be

masculine virtues, but in the eighteenth century they are never feminine ones: when catastrophe forces Burney's last heroine, the Wanderer, to be independent, she finds herself utterly unsexed in the eyes of the world, and she refuses to charge the world with injustice on this score. For her part, Mrs. Tyrold clears herself from the taint of unfeminine independence by submitting to the guidance of her adoring husband. Given his weakness this requires enormous effort. *His* obviously erring—and erring because too tender—heart, rather than *her* rigorous and infallible judgment is to serve as "her standard excellence." But because the two are so often at odds, this submission chafes. Mrs. Tyrold reasonably opposes Sir Hugh's foolish schemes, schemes to which her fond husband yields, and with ruinous results. In her, the rationalist's haughty but accurate sense of her rightness conflicts with the wife's duty of obedience. And yet such is the rigor of her virtue that Mrs. Tyrold unconditionally observes the "vow taken at the altar to her husband" which requires that there be "no dissent in opinion" (C 14) from him. She yields to the promptings of his fondness without "murmur," but with covert frustration, retiring "to her own room, to conceal with how ill a grace she complied" (C 13).

Comparing his mother's penetration to his uncle Relvil's "weak parts" (C 229), Lionel opines that "there was some odd mistake in their births, and that my mother took away the brains of the man, and left the woman's for the noddle of my poor uncle" (C 225). Mrs. Tyrold's virilescence, as a result, far from carrying any prestige, underscores frustration rather than procures fulfillment. Gender is thus disrupted in Mrs. Tyrold's case by inversion rather than by reversal, for rendering them grotesque, women's immasculation only aggravates the problem of female subjectivity. While avuncular figures like Sir Hugh and Relvil take hysterically to their beds and while good Mr. Tyrold is immobilized in prison, Mrs. Tyrold becomes the guardian of a system which negates her agency on any other terms except the ones which make her dreadful. It is not the mild father, but the rigorous mother who is "deeply feared by all her children" (C 238), and as we shall see, at last most dramatically by Camilla herself. In a novel whose central images recur to statuary, Mrs. Tyrold embodies the rigidity of the law, a rigidity which is crippling and scary. The emphasis in the opening "A Family Scene" remains squarely on the exemplary preciousness of Mr. Tyrold's sensitivity which Mrs. Tyrold must honor even where it errs, not on the excellence of her capability.

In classic sentimental fashion, then, paternal authority here and throughout the novel secures itself by staging its weakness rather than its might. Virtually every male character here relies, as Mr. Tyrold does, on the disciplinary properties of this weakness. Indeed, one of the few specimens of English manhood *not* touched by this system is the birdkeeper, who outrages Camilla by the corporal punishment he inflicts upon the diminutive bullfinch to teach it tricks. He acquires and sustains his dominion over the caged bird

by, in his own words, "the true old way, Miss; I licks him." Everyone, the birdkeeper continues with a menacing grin, is "the better for a little beating, as I tells my wife. There's nothing so fine set, Miss, but what will bear it, more or less" (C 492). Comprehending bullfinches, wives, and impulsive young daughters, who are always trespassing without knowing it, the birdkeeper's words are a threatening reminder to her of what, according to "the true old way," lay in store for delicate creatures who displeased their monitors. Unembarrassed by charges of brutality (six or seven bullfinches die under his pedagogy for each one that graduates), the birdkeeper does not regard his birds as unfortunate. Indeed, he is the one put upon, for their own ungovernability necessitates his stern measures: they are so shy and cunning that "one's forced to be pretty tough with 'em" (C 493).

Having forsaken the "true old way," modern male authority, by contrast, wins its sway by asserting not its legitimacy as the agent of discipline but its status as the object of pity, much as Parson Yorick absorbs the plaintive starling into his own name (Sterne), transforming it into a figure for his sensitivity. In *Camilla* sentimentality is a more violent affair, in which men gain sway by a passive-aggressive display of susceptibility. The most conspicuous example of this, of course, is Alphonso Bellamy, alias Nicholas Gwigg, who gets his way with the credulous Eugenia by pleading a passion for her so desperate that he will kill himself rather than live without her. Not until she is within his clutches will he drop the sentimental mask and adopt the birdkeeper's directness—"I shall lock you up upon bread and water for the rest of your life" (C 858). But even after their marriage he threatens suicide, and such is his underlying effeminacy that he botches his threat and dies accidentally by his own hand. Other men also make a spectacle of their immolation. Persistently vaunting his unique stature as a "man" of spirit who swears, spends, drinks, without unmanly restraint—he scoffs at Melmond as "just a girl's man . . . all sentiment, and poetry, and heroics" (C 240)—Lionel Tyrold may appear to be an exception to this rule, but he too tyrannizes by his weakness. Coercing his sister by convincing her he feels too much rather than too little, he supplements his increasingly importunate demands for money with suicide threats: "I have no great *gusta* for blowing out my brains" (C 498), he declares, implying however, that he will have no other choice unless Camilla comes up with money for him. The fiery Macdersey likewise woos Indiana by telling her "he'd shoot himself through the brains" if she were so "cruel" as to refuse his suit (C 377), and his hero, the clownish Othello, that man-of-action turned man-of-feeling, cries out in piteous dialect, "I must veep!" (C 323).

Camilla never gets a chance to watch this Othello off himself for the edification of the assembled, as it turns out, because she must rush home to another sentimental male, Sir Hugh, who is at that moment enacting his own (premature) deathbed scene which the whole family has been called to wit-

ness. The novel's principal figurehead of authority, Sir Hugh is the man of feeling writ large, to whom Mr. Tyrold fondly and Mrs. Tyrold reluctantly defer, and in crafting him Burney has taken care to stress his Englishness. Among a long line of "amiable humorists" running from Roger de Coverley to Uncle Toby and beyond, Sir Hugh is a national figure—the eccentric but endearing head of the family, the keeper of its inherited wealth, the diffuser of its good name through munificence. In the 1790s, active, distinctively English good nature such as his was increasingly invoked as a means of differentiating the wholesomeness of the English ruling class from the decadence of the French. Sir Hugh's stature as a national type was quite apparent to Burney's politically discriminating readers. An indefatigable projector for the counterrevolution, Frances Anne Crewe had already enlisted Burney to write a charity sermon on behalf of French priests fleeing the Terror, and she tried to convince Burney to contribute to an antijacobin weekly magazine. Slated to appear under titles as diverse as "The Breakfast Table," "The Modern Nestor," "The Old Gentleman," or (more ominously) "The Spying Glass," this periodical was to feature Sir Hugh himself animadverting on the times, and as Crewe assumed, opposing newfangled Frenchified speculative systems with old-fashioned English virtues of the heart.[15]

Professing herself "gratified" by Crewe's purposes and "flattered" by her request, Burney still declined the proposal.[16] But though she did so pleading her unfitness for political journalism, she might just as easily have pleaded Sir Hugh's unfitness as a figure for national salvation. Despite his idealization, Sir Hugh is also a figure of mismanagement, directly responsible for many of the most serious ills of the novel precisely because of the affective drag in which sentimentality has invested him. As if to emphasize this, Burney puts him in women's clothes. In a passage which encapsulates much of the plot, Sir Hugh celebrates the little Camilla's birthday with all the absurd guilelessness that marks him as a man of feeling, a child in the eyes of the world:

> [He] suffered his darling little girl [Camilla] to govern and direct him at her pleasure. . . . She metamorphosed him into a female, accoutring him with her fine new cap, while she enveloped her own small head in his wig; and then, tying the maid's apron round his waist, put a rattle into his hand, and Eugenia's doll upon his lap, which she told him was a baby that he must nurse and amuse. (C 18)

Sir Hugh gladly becomes a spectacle—a "comical sight" and "grotesque figure" (C 18) which children, servants, and "their numerous guests" behold with glee. But this lord of misrule, wielding a rattle instead of a sceptre, rules nonetheless, as the double sense of "suffer" makes clear. The apparently humiliating reversal he embodies when dressed as a woman is authorized by his permission, and any subversive potential it seems to portend is thus circumscribed and absorbed.[17] Little Camilla's "pleasure" seems to be at stake,

but ultimately it is his pleasure that she and all the children serve—they are, after all, severally scuttled from Etherington to Beech Park and back again, enriched or disinherited according to his whims. Yet the other sense of "suffer" is also crucial here, for in this novel about male suffering, the humiliation he seems to take on enlarges the sphere of his power. Sir Hugh isn't "metamorphosed" into just any sort of woman by donning female clothing; it is the maternal part he appropriates. Nursing is a variously gendered phenomenon throughout this novel. When Edgar watches Camilla nursing little children, he finds that she may not be a degraded flirt after all. But the tenderness which sensibility opens out to men makes them more effectually maternal than women are. Unlike Wollstonecraft, Burke, we recall, has nothing to say on the subject of Marie-Antoinette's maternity, stressing instead Louis XVI's anxiety as a father, and sentimental literature in general cedes maternal softness to men. In *Camilla,* fathers too are active nurses—Mr. Tyrold, for instance, shares in the nursing of the sick Eugenia, and one suspects that his ministrations are gentler than his wife's. Nevertheless, male nurturance, like all other forms of authoritative guidance (think of Marchmont's tutelage, or Mr. Tyrold's sermon) always bungles here. In the case at hand, Sir Hugh, wearying of the maternal part, cries out "Do take away poor Doll, for fear I should let it slip" (C 18), and he is right, though the creature he eventually does let slip is not, unfortunately, a doll. Soon he unwittingly exposes Eugenia to a disease that will scar her for life, and then he drops her from the seesaw and leaves her dwarfed and crippled. Without casting him as a monster, as Radcliffe would, or as a coarse bully botching his daughter's life while quaffing claret with a neighboring squire, in the Wollstonecraftean mode, Burney dramatizes the ruinous ineptitude of a figure beloved as a national institution. She thus assails sentimental authority for maintaining the offices and the prerogatives of power without possessing the competencies of it, exposing the perverse logic which obliges us to love him more with every failure.

Mangled by male nurturance, Eugenia Tyrold exemplifies in the most blatant way possible the mutilation of the female subject under male sentimentality. But what is even more shocking than her injury is its systematic erasure from discourse. As the little Eugenia grows up, no one lets her look in a mirror, and no one in the family is permitted to refer to her disfigurement, which we are constantly being given to understand is egregiously hideous. Withheld from any means of beholding or thinking about herself, she is raised in complete ignorance of her condition. The manifest rationale for this prohibition on self-reflexivity, of course, is a wish to spare her feelings. But this wish to keep Eugenia from feeling on her own behalf is exactly what is so sinister. From the beginning, Sir Hugh has treated Eugenia's misfortune in such a way as to render himself the chief subject of it, the passionate inflation of his rhetoric actually guaranteeing the diminishment of his guilt. Weeping

and wailing, in a frenzy of passive aggression, he enjoins his brother and sister to "Hate me . . . for you can't help it!" (C 28) or to "Kill me in return" (C 29), though his ramblings remain childishly self-exculpatory even when most apparently self-responsible: "It's all my doing; though innocently enough, as to any meaning, God knows" (C 33).

Eugenia must be kept in the dark about her suffering because that knowledge would unsettle the allegiance she owes to men of feeling. Not accidentally, Eugenia's giddy male relatives lack the discipline for classical education. Since its immasculating rigors are not functional for sentimental manhood, they form female manhood instead. Inspiring Eugenia with a pious reverence for the father and his laws, as well as with stoic self-command, classical education becomes the basis of Eugenia's virtue and at the same time really does deform her. Having "read no novels" (C 315)—the sort of "women's" literature on which pedants like Orkborne and moralists like Marchmont frown—Eugenia cannot anticipate the machinations of fortune hunters. She is vulnerable because she takes her duty seriously: she defers to the spectacle of male feeling ("Tears in a man. . . . How touching!" [C 316] she exclaims credulously about Bellamy's performance as a lovesick suitor), and she honors promises, perhaps the single most important obligations of political subjects, even if made under duress. Sometimes chided for this quixotism, Eugenia only does what every dutiful daughter ought to do: efface herself before her obligations. Burney's defamiliarizing excess thus discloses the unbearable oddness of the exemplary.

Under male sentimentality, the female in distress, as we have seen, is an object either of suspicion or derision, not of a tender compassion that testifies to the male onlooker's goodness of heart. True, when the preternaturally beautiful Indiana emits "little shrieks, and palpitations," the quixotically gallant Melmond is captivated: "What feminine, what beautiful delicacy!—How sweet in terror!—How soul-piercing in alarm" (C 134–35). But Indiana's alarm is phony; her only real fear is losing her audience. Just as the calamities of the poor make up the amusement of the gentry (C 82), so is genuine female suffering greeted with the gleeful, unrelenting cruelty Burney is unsurpassed at depicting: officers ridicule Eugenia's hellish ugliness in Camilla's hearing; Dubster calls her "that limping little body" (C 84); the market women call her a scarecrow to her face; Clermont considers her a "wizen little stump" (C 569); and even her own brother feels no compunction about describing her as "a little dowdy thing" (C 500) whose misfortune, in his view, makes her a less fitting object of Sir Hugh's bounty than himself. The most innocent and outrageously severe suffering in the novel, then, has no place in the sentimental economy, and it is especially off-limits to the woman whose experience it is.

In *Camilla,* imperviousness to suffering is woman's cardinal virtue. Even though Mr. Tyrold assures Eugenia that "sympathy springs spontaneously

for whatever is unfortunate, and respect for whatever is innocent," we never see such sympathy. It is Eugenia's duty to "steel [her]self" (C 306), and to prove herself a good daughter by not feeling her distress and thus sparing the sympathetic feelings of the uncle and parents who are responsible for it. Once she discovers and laments her condition, her father, bedewing her cheeks with his tears, effects her desensitization by taking her to spy upon a ravishingly beautiful young woman. Inviting her and Camilla to gaze upon this "beautiful creature" whose "face" is "perfect" (C 306) and whose "chin" a "statuary might have wished to model" (C 309), Mr. Tyrold remarks that since even the greatest beauty must survive the decay of her charms, women must cultivate a heroic indifference to pain: "The soldier who enters the field of battle requires not more courage, though of a different nature, than the faded beauty who enters an assembly-room" and to prepare for this eventuality a woman must withstand the "flatteries" that would "enervate" and feminize her when she should instead be inuring herself with martial "fortitude" (C 308). Despite her respect for the heroic mode, Eugenia is not content with this comfort. Only when the young woman begins to slobber and to burst into "loud, shrill, and discordant laughter" (C 309) do Eugenia and Camilla realize that Mr. Tyrold has set up an object lesson in the inappropriateness of self-pity rather than a *vanitas* sermon on the evanescence of beauty:

> The sisters now fearfully interchanged looks that shewed they thought her mad, and both endeavoured to draw Mr. Tyrold from the gate, but in vain; he made them hold by his arms, and stood still.
>
> Without seeming giddy, she next began to jump; and he now could only detain his daughters, by shewing them the gate, at which they stood, was locked.
>
> In another minute, she perceived them, and, coming eagerly forward, dropt several low courtesies, saying, at every fresh bend—"Good day!—Good day!—Good day!"
>
> Equally trembling, they now both turned pale with fear; but Mr. Tyrold, who was still immovable, answered her by a bow, and asked if she were well. (C 309)

Although anxiety about what Johnson dubbed "the uncertain continuance of reason" was endemic to the culture of late-eighteenth-century England—George III's insanity could never be very far from Burney's, as from any informed subject's mind—the lovely madwoman is a trope of sentimental literature.[18] In this episode, an instance of gendered reading, Burney is glancing at Sterne, whose *Sentimental Journey* is an intertextual presence throughout the novel. Like Mr. Tyrold, whose interest in female beauty is chiefly and avowedly in its "effect upon the beholder" (C 307), whom he assumes to be male, Parson Yorick, as we have already seen, indulges his sympathy for the mad Maria, and the "undescribable emotions" welling in

him make him "positive I have a soul."[19] Burney characteristically in raises the tension of this topos several notches, rendering the madness of her "fair afflicted" (C 309) more turbulent and gross: her autistic babble is violent, self-mutilating, and obscene. But curiously enough, Parson Tyrold, though transfixed, looks on with perfect equanimity rather than with the Sternean effusions we might expect: he can moralize upon her condition because he need not partake of it. His daughters, on the other hand, are pained to the quick by the display of a woman with whom they must identify, and they try repeatedly to draw away their adamantine father. He remains "immovable," the gate is "locked," and thus the refrain of Sterne's songbird ("I can't get out—I can't get out") suits Camilla and Eugenia as much as it does the idiot and the other encaged creatures here.

Mr. Tyrold contrives this spectacle in order to teach Eugenia to be thankful that her mind is lucid no matter how deformed her body, and indeed the stalwart Eugenia takes it like a soldier, vowing to think about the lovely idiot whenever she is "discontented," and to "submit, at least with calmness, to [her] lighter evils and milder fate" (C 311). The "fair afflicted" is thus clearly supposed to embody what every woman should fear becoming: in Eugenia's words, a "spectacle of human degradation" (C 311). And yet, as *Camilla* amply shows, the lesson is not nearly so simple as this because of the ways in which that spectacle is gendered. As Mr. Tyrold remarks, because the woman "was born an idiot," she is "insensible to her terrible state" (C 310). Insensibility is actually what is required of Eugenia and Camilla. To possess "beauty, without mind," far from being dreadful, is all-too-desirable. For Parson Yorick, madness enhances rather than degrades Maria's charm: with her vacant gaze, she is still so "feminine" that she possesses "all that the heart wishes, or the eye looks for in a woman."[20] In *Camilla,* what Eugenia considers to be the spectacle of human degradation many gentlemen see as the picture of ideal femininity: Indiana Lynmere. Yet Indiana personifies "beauty, without mind" almost as much as the idiot does, and the two figures are linked by signifiers of internal deficiency. Perfect as "statuary" (C 84, 309), they are each without volition: the "mind-dependent" (C 305) Indiana is called an "automaton" (C 191) by Mrs. Arlbery, and the idiot is described as a "machine" (C 309). Despite inhuman vacancy—Melmond finally deplores the "vacancy of [Indiana's] soul's intelligence" (C 813), and the "shocking imbecility" of the idiot's utterances resemble "nothing human"—they are also compelling spectacles of "sensibility personified" (C 103).

The figure of the female automaton, then, is abhorred as well as desired, and the contradictions circulating around her derive from uncertainties about female interiority which sentimentality gives rise to, or better, from men's anxiety concerning these uncertainties: is the woman in distress faking it? does her suffering signify? Yorick, as we recall, fears that the starling's

heartrending song, taught by the servant of its aristocratic owner and hence carrying with it the portentous affectivity of the underclass, may not be credible, and hence that Yorick's pity for it may be wasted or misplaced.[21] And yet Maria's madness seems to him credible and truly feminine because her dementia puts her beyond the possibility of looking back, and hence beyond the suspicion of staging her sorrow in order to seduce him. Because she has no interiority, she can conceal nothing. Camilla is present in this scene because her subjectivity presents the same problem to Edgar, who despite Mrs. Arlbery's characterization of him as "frozen composition of premature wisdom" (C 375), is the quintessentially sensitive male spectator. Not coincidentally, when Camilla's identity caves in under his scrutiny, she becomes an idiot woman too: her "intellects" become "shattered" (C 830), her "eyes" become "dim," her "faculties confused" (C 819), her compliance "mechanical" (C 829), and her demeanor "vacant" (C 819), "lost alternately in misery and absence" (C 820). Only then can he love her.

With the exception of the perfectly dutiful Lavinia—who has no desires and hence no narrative—the Tyrold sisters trouble their father with untoward feeling, and he encourages them to suppress it by inviting them into a martial, heroicized vision of femininity which in Camilla's case especially is of national import. Often reprinted in reviews and conduct books, Mr. Tyrold's "little sermon upon the difficulties and the conduct of the female heart" (C 353) admonishes Camilla to modesty by linking her conduct to the well-being of the nation, for in the 1790s conservative ideologues considered regulation of "decent" sexuality a political priority. Appearing to accept as noncontroversial those arguments which proponents of democratic reform had made about the moral equality of the sexes, Mr. Tyrold's sermon finesses them by framing them as a very loaded question about sexual propriety: should "women as well as men . . . be allowed to dispose of their own affections" (C 358)? Like Maria Edgeworth, who dodged controversy by declaring herself more interested in the "happiness" than in the "rights" of women, Mr. Tyrold concurs with reformers like Wollstonecraft "in theory" only to dismiss their proposals as more "curious than important" given the presumed absence of any "practicability" (C 358). Part of his argument is prudential, claiming to make women content with what is likely to be their lot, marriage. Living as she does in what Mr. Tyrold calls "this doubly appendant state" (C 356), the modest female, recognizing her dependence upon first her parents and then her husband, must exist in a state of affective equipoise. The engagement of her desires or cultivation of her mind might render her unsuitable for and unhappy with "the husband into whose hands she may fall" (C 357) and on whose "humour" she must subsist.

But other aspects of Mr. Tyrold's argument enforce modesty with a more coercive sting. Sidestepping Wollstonecraft's critique of modesty, Mr. Tyrold asks, "Since Man must choose Woman, or Woman Man, which should come

forward to make the choice? Which should retire to be chosen," but the question is purely rhetorical: no good girl would favor the prerogative of choice. A "modest and reasonable young woman," inspired by "all her feelings of delicacy, all her notions of propriety," will of course wish to wait (as Lavinia Tyrold does) until asked by a gentleman her parents approve. Despite his paternal kindness, Mr. Tyrold's implication cannot be missed: Camilla ought never have formed a wish for Edgar's hand without being asked, and having illicitly done so, she must now stifle her desire, and "combat against a positive wish" (C 359). The world, monitoring female propriety, will consider "unreturned female regard" (C 361) as evidence of a woman's immodestly "ungoverned passions," and even if the imputation of what amounts to promiscuous excess is not fair, a woman who has had so little respect for herself as to form an unsolicited passion cannot "reasonably demand" anything like "consideration and respect from the community" (C 359).

Like the "altered female" whose entrance into an assembly room where she once reigned is as heroic as that of a soldier onto the battlefield, Camilla is true to her Virgilian pedigree: she must "struggle" against herself as she would struggle "against an enemy" (C 358). But if Mr. Tyrold's call to warfare within pushes Camilla towards the idiot's madness, it also urges a cessation of affect that pushes her towards Indiana's statued coldness. The difference is that while Indiana's insensibility is real—she has no feelings—Camilla's is an act, for she possesses feelings which are to be invested in the drapery of decency. Mr. Tyrold's recommendation of female discretion and reserve resonates with Burkean subtexts. Far from encouraging the vice of hypocrisy or part-playing, the concealment of her frailty, Mr. Tyrold explains, is a "conciliation to virtue" and carries a national agenda: "It is the bond that keeps society from disunion; the veil that shades our weakness from exposure, giving time for that interior correction, which the publication of our infirmities would else, with respect to mankind, make of no avail" (C 361).

Men like Sir Hugh or Mr. Tyrold can be loved for wearing their hearts on their sleeves because sentimentality licenses their excess. Their effusions extend their authority by demonstrating the mildness of their yoke. The same sort of overflow is not permitted Camilla, even though, as her name indicates, it is her birthright. The drapery of decency seems to be a peculiarly feminine costume, requiring that a woman both have and conceal her feeling. Not to have any, of course, is to threaten the sentimental economy by failing to cede to it the veneration, awe, loyalty, and love it requires. Accordingly, men first adore the vacancy that ensures the unclouded radiance of Indiana's brow, finally to recoil from her indifference. Camilla, on the other hand, is doubly bound because the frailty of warmth is required. Had she been insensible to Edgar, she would be unworthy because unfeeling. But having given way to her feelings and formed a wish, she is scolded for weakness and

exhorted to stony constraint, to "shut up every avenue by which a secret which should die untold can further escape you" (C 360). Camilla, then, must masquerade as a statue, conscious that reserve such as hers is "the bond that keeps society from disunion."

The injunction to have and to stifle emotion seems bad enough. But, from Edgar's point of view, it is too lenient, allowing a dangerous degree of control to women in the conduct of their inner life and licensing a concealment which can impose upon and thereby undo the authority of male onlookers. The novel's chief policeman of bourgeois notions of femininity, Edgar Mandlebert prohibits women even the narcissistic pleasure in their spectacularity that Rousseau granted them as coquettes by nature. Having appointed himself Camilla's "monitor," he is constantly spying or listening in on her in order to trace her sensibility to its wellsprings, to discover her "real" disposition, and to assess her worthiness as a wife. Camilla is far from resenting this watchfulness. Indeed, so long as their watching is reciprocal, the system seems fair. To her, his watchfulness proves that her behavior is of intimate consequence to him; and to him, her compliancy gratifies his authority and betokens a wifely sweetness of temper.

The hideous logic of this familiar system whereby (to recall Mr. Tyrold's formulation) a man chooses a woman and a woman retires to be chosen, is disclosed through the exaggerated suspicion authorized by Marchmont. A two-time loser in marriage, Marchmont suspects the waywardness and inscrutability of women's interiority, of which a husband must possess himself entirely. After the death of his first wife, Marchmont discovers that she had written not his own name, but that of another man over and over again in her private diary; having been caught just before committing the act of adultery that would oblige him to cast her off, the second wife wastes away. The stories of Marchmont's wives could easily be imagined as radically charged sentimental novels in potentia, the first about a dutiful young girl dying of disappointed love after consenting to a marriage without affection; the second, about a far less dutiful woman who wastes her life away in a loveless marriage until she, rather mysteriously, is "no more" (C 645). But although the redundancy of dead wives—Dubster also has survived the decease of two—invites resistant counterreadings in the toxicity of husbands' love, the readings of Marchmont and Edgar underwrite the legitimacy of a husband's dominion over the inner life of his wife. Upon the decease of his first wife, Marchmont is mortified by her dead body: a "lifeless, soulless, inanimate frame was all she had bestowed upon me" (C 643), he remarks, in words which place her in the company of the other female automatons of *Camilla* whose vacancy is deplored, even as it is also desired. Persuaded that a husband must be in "entire possession of the heart" of the woman *before* he proposes, Marchmont adjures Edgar to watch Camilla with a distrustful eye for consummate self-referentiality, asking of her every move not "'Is this

right in her'" but rather "'Would it be pleasing to me'" (C 160).

In a brilliant discussion drawing on game theory, Doody has illuminated the impossible position in which Camilla has been placed by guardians of feminine virtue—her father on one hand, and her "monitor" Edgar on the other.[22] Unworthy of her father's regard if she exposes an affection that has not been solicited, and unable to gain Edgar's if she does not, Camilla cannot find any manner of being *not* liable to severe reproach. Much in the spirit of Othello, who imagines Desdemona to have slept with the entire army, Edgar convicts her of "the common dissipation of coquetry" (C 461), pruriently recurring to fantasies about her degradation, her "perverted" and "spoilt" delicacy (C 705). By Edgar's lights, the problem with coquettes like Camilla (and by extension, Indiana) is not that they possess "beauty without mind" but rather that their minds are not vacant enough. Lamenting that she is too conscious by far, Edgar nostalgically recalls the time before Camilla lost that "clear transparent singleness of mind, so beautiful in its total ignorance of every species of scheme, every sort of double measure, every idea of secret view and latent expedient" (C 671). The transparency and ignorance he yearns for recall, once again, the idiot's vacancy. Surface without depth, beauty without mind are for him constitutive of female excellence.

Enjoined by her father to soldierly self-command over the same somatic signs of sensibility (tears, fainting spells, blushes, starts) that Edgar requires on the grounds that they bypass faculties of artful self-control, Camilla is brought to an impasse towards the end of the novel, and death and madness are her only ways out. As she learns that her father has been incarcerated and her uncle's estate relinquished for her unconfessed debts, her mind and body snap: "Words of alarming incoherency proclaimed the danger menacing her intellects, while agonies nearly convulsive distorted her features, and writhed her form" (C 824). Camilla's misery is necessarily overdetermined, for given the dual prohibitions under which she labors, nothing less than total devastation could, on the one hand, legitimize her loss of self-control and, on the other, authenticate her feelings. It takes a crisis of national proportions to bring this about. At a time when the neighborhood was still the basic political unit and the squire's manor the basic site of law, the desolation of Sir Hugh's estate ("naked and forlorn, despoiled of its hospitality, bereft of its master,—all its faithful old servants unrewarded dismissed" [C 855]) is fraught with import which aggravates Camilla's guilt. Female manners must be awfully momentous if it takes only a few debts at the milliner's shop to devastate one's entire family and all the dependents in its environs. And yet since Camilla's guilt itself is an abscess of forbidden egoism, her immolation is reprehensibly self-indulgent. Indeed as Camilla herself learns from Lavinia, Mrs. Tyrold refuses Camilla's wish to come home on the grounds that she only wants "to abandon herself to her feelings" (C 862).

Insofar as it underscores the prohibition on female distress, then, the cli-

mactic moment of *Camilla* inverts the initiatory moment of *Udolpho*. The scene where the overwrought Camilla looks at what turns out to be Bellamy's corpse demonstrably adapts Emily St. Aubert's horrifying view of the body behind the veil in *Udolpho*. The sight of "a dead body" is what finally, in the landlady's words, makes Camilla go "out of her mind" and sink into a deathly delirium. Like Emily, Camilla cannot resist confronting the spectacle of a dead body "stretched out upon a table." Driven by a curiosity that is stronger than her dread, she too must lift a "cloth" which "covered the face" if she is to get the view she both fears and desires (C 870). But the similarities stop there. In Radcliffe's novel, Emily is permitted misrecognitions that disclose truths contrary to those authorized by the official discourses of the novel, and thus her vivid imagination of Laurentini's rotting corpse, abetted by servants' stories, enables Emily to figure her own suffering as nothing else will. But whereas in *Udolpho*, as we have seen, the sex of the body is not transparent, in Burney's novel Camilla is never allowed even the fleeting fancy that the body could be her own. For Camilla, the body is decidedly male—"Dismal is its view; grim, repulsive, terrific its aspect" (C 871)—and as such more formidable than it was when alive, for like all the spectacles of male distress we have seen so far, it incriminates Camilla through its very recumbency. Coming upon it when she has considered vying with it by committing suicide, Camilla looks upon the supposedly murdered body only to condemn herself for criminally "blamable self-desertion" (C 873) that renders her guiltier even than Bellamy's (nonexistent) murderer because she should have known better than to make a spectacle of her suffering.

Camilla renounces the guilty agency of suicide, but unwilled mental and physical collapse accomplish what everyone has wanted. Camilla does everything a woman can do to die short of dying itself, and this extremity gives her in abundance what everyone has refused all along: pity, and the permission to feel that it carries with it. Having been compelled to *her* bed much as her uncles have taken to theirs, but with none of the fanfare, Camilla herself becomes the figure stretched out behind the curtain, and her condition is judged so hopeless that servants call for a clergyman (who turns out to be Edgar himself) to read the prayer for the dead over her expiring body. Proof positive that she is without subterfuge, Camilla's dying exposes the "true feelings of her heart" (C 898). Accordingly, Edgar "moisten[s]" her hand "with his tears," a "testimony of his sensibility" (C 878). The murderousness of Marchmont's caution, then, is not renounced but fully satisfied and then some. Edgar may safely marry Camilla because, reading over letters marked "*Not to be delivered until I am dead,*" he can be sure that he is "the constant object of every view, the ultimate motive to every action" (C 902–3). And as if this weren't assurance enough, ever the monitor he then (with the authorization of the teary-eyed Mr. Tyrold) actually eavesdrops on Camilla's confessions to her mother, without coming forward and renewing his suit until

he hears her avow her undying love. Clearly, scenes of reconciliation that should, if conventions were allowed to function normally, feel satisfying and appropriate instead pall by an excess that keeps reasserting rather than resolving the problems that have generated the crises to begin with.

As central as the Edgar-Camilla conflict has been in the plotting of *Camilla,* however, in some ways Camilla's relations to other women are of equal if not more weight to Camilla herself. Burney is unparalleled in her readiness to investigate relationships other than the love plot, and in her exceedingly capacious novels women's relations to other women are depicted with a richness and consequence that in some cases rival the sway men are supposed to have in their affective lives. In *Camilla,* the very derelictions of sentimental men sometimes make it possible for women to assume new relationships to each other, as when Camilla displays her "courage" by coming to the "rescue" (C 388) of the distressed "youth, sensibility, and beauty" of Mrs. Berlinton, under ineffectual attack by a fop standing "a few yards off, taking a pinch of snuff, and humming an opera air" (C 389). And like the chivalric male, Camilla becomes endeared to the object of her courageous exertions. More often, however, the disruption of gender markers authorized by sentimentality has, in problematizing virtually every mode of femininity, rendered women hard to love. The following description cannot keep from painting women with the same brush it paints fops:

> Clermont Lynmere so entirely resembled his sister in person, that now, in his first youth, he might almost have been taken for her, even without change of dress: but the effect produced upon the beholders bore not the same parallel: what in her was beauty in its highest delicacy, in him seemed effeminacy in its lowest degradation. The brilliant fairness of his forehead, the transparent pink in his cheeks, the pouting vermillion of his lips, the liquid lustre of his languishing blue eyes, the minute form of his almost infantine mouth, and the snowy whiteness of his small hands and taper fingers, far from bearing the attraction which, in his sister, rendered them so lovely, made him considered by his own sex as an unmanly fop, and by the women, as too conceited to admire any thing but himself. (C 569)

Assailing the effeminacy of the modern male, this passage fairly bristles with a homophobic determination to reaffirm the very markers of gender which sentimentality elsewhere blurs: we are to love Sir Hugh when he is in woman's clothing or when he fails to master ancient languages, but we are to despise Clermont for looking like a woman and preferring newspapers to the classics. And yet, even though this passage purportedly despises Clermont for not being a woman—i.e., for being a caricature of a woman, effeminate rather than feminine—it clearly despises women as well. The novel everywhere insists that Indiana's femininity is effeminacy, every bit as put on, car-

icatured, hyperconventional, theatrical, and undesirable as her brother's. As we have amply seen, other modes of femininity—Eugenia's duty, Camilla's liveliness—appear equally extravagant and maiming in their own way.

Given her heroines' yearning for intimacy with women—Burney's attachment to her sisters and her intense but ill-fated intimacy with Mrs. Thrale surely figure here—the unsettling of feminine roles feels like a heavy loss, at times even a betrayal. This is especially so where mothers are concerned. Like Cecilia, whose enthrallment to Mrs. Delvile is the central and most absorbing subject of *Cecilia,* Camilla desires a mother's tenderness with passion that leaves Edgar far behind, and yet sentimentality has so alienated women from their "natural" roles, the novel appears to complain, that maternal love between women is scarcely possible. Camilla's penitential return to Etherington is prevented because one person is there whose voice she no sooner overhears than she must flee, whose wrathful face she would sooner die than behold, and from whose terrible malediction she shrinks with dread as from Yahweh Himself. This potent figure is Mrs. Tyrold, licensed by male sentimentality to be awesome on its behalf, while it arrogates to itself the sweetness typically assigned to feminine beauty. While Wollstonecraft likes to imagine a nation of manly women exerting their power productively to control, guide, admonish, and discipline, Burney is embarrassed at best and horrified at worst by virile women. Where they are respected as effectual guardians and negotiators, as with Mrs. Selwyn in *Evelina,* they are kept at arm's length as "unfeminine," and when their power is exercised under the banner of patriarchy, as with Mrs. Delvile in *Cecilia* or Mrs. Tyrold here, they are ferociously equivocal. Having aggravated Camilla's distress by doubting its reality, Mrs. Tyrold still enjoins her daughter to stifle her transgressive sentience: "Repress, repress . . . these strong feelings. . . . It is time to conquer this impetuous sensibility" (C 881–82). Camilla, "[s]truck with extreme dread of committing yet further wrong" (C 882), is ready as always to consent to yet another round of browbeating even though she has only just returned from the brink of death. She obeys, soon to give way (helplessly and uncomplainingly, of course) to the "weak state of her body." Only when confronted with her daughter's corporeal dissolution does Mrs. Tyrold finally believe her, and take to her bosom the child she has banished, becoming a fantasy of maternal misericordia, "softly solicitous, and exquisitely kind" (C 883), profuse with all of the intimacies of tenderness—the hovering solicitude, the soothing words, the enfolding embraces, the incessant caresses—for which Camilla has been desperate. The extremity of Camilla's abjection thus both reproaches Mrs. Tyrold's disciplinary ire and temporarily restores her, as the novel nostalgically implies, to womanly sympathy outside the sentimental economy.

But not all women in *Camilla* circulate within this economy, and as a result not all are so tainted. Mrs. Arlbery, a widow, is a woman of wit rather

than of feeling. As her name suggests—"Arlbery" is an anagram of sorts for Burney's married name, "Arblay"—Mrs. Arlbery is in part a projection of Burney herself.[23] Burney's portrait is largely captivating: the "commanding air of her countenance, and the easiness of her carriage" are allowed to speak "a confirmed internal assurance, that her charms and her power were absolute" (C 86). What is so unusual about Mrs. Arlbery's conscious power is that it is as free from the taint of excess towards the feminine (i.e., coquettishness) as it is from excess towards the masculine (i.e., inversion), and accordingly it makes possible relations of desire to other women that are not mediated by heterosexual gender codes, as Mary's relation to Ann is in Wollstonecraft's *Mary,* for example. Mrs. Arlbery's pursuit of Camilla has all the earmarks of seduction: having perceived Camilla's "youthful wonder, and felt a propensity to increase it" (C 89), Mrs. Arlbery turns on all her charms with no other end in view than to become "a violent favourite with" Camilla (C 366). Burney's novels and journals are full of the delights of hetero- as well as homoerotic flirtation, even though these delights cannot generally be very frequently, very freely, or very safely indulged. Mrs. Arlbery's flirtation is conducted with the physical intimacy Burney's heroines pine for—she "lean[s] her hand on the shoulder of Camilla" or "pat[s] her cheek" (C 95), for example—and its results are enjoyed with a pleasure and ease that have a clear erotic charge: "Mrs. Arlbery, charmed with all she observed [in Camilla], and flattered by all she inspired, felt such satisfaction in her evident conquest, that before the *tête-à-tête* was closed, their admiration was become nearly mutual" (C 248). In a novel where all other versions of femininity are disfiguring—from the self-mutilation in the service of soldierly valor that is Camilla's amazonian birthright, to the moral and physical deformities voluntarily undertaken by Mrs. Tyrold and Eugenia—Mrs. Arlbery is the only woman who experiences her "equivocal being" as pleasure, and it is small wonder that Camilla takes some of that pleasure in.

Most of the excess in the novel generates pain. But it is also possible, of course, to take pleasure in excess and in the subversion it promotes, as campy excess typically does. In the case of Mrs. Arlbery, Burney appears willing to consider this possibility and the emancipatory potential it may hold for women. True, in the interests of symmetry, Burney halfheartedly attempts to make Mrs. Arlbery take responsibility for meddling with Camilla, much as Marchmont had interfered with Edgar. But because most of Mrs. Arlbery's judgments about Edgar stand as accurate, the attempt is not successful. Mrs. Arlbery is permitted to take a pure pleasure in raillery that Camilla and the reader alike are invited to share. Not that her sallies are completely unbounded, of course. Indeed, careful to differentiate her from Mrs. Berlinton, Burney goes to some lengths to establish the unassailability of her reputation and to circumscribe her diversions by her conviction that "vice is detestable" (C 365). Still, her flamboyance—note that her dress is

perversely "fantastic and studied . . . in the same proportion as that of every other person present was more simple and quiet" (C 87), and her manners conspicuously unconventional—menaces the hyperorthodox. Mrs. Arlbery's sharp wit, then, is bounded by morality, but not by heterosexuality, and sentimentality insists on the linkage of the two. Not surprisingly, although Mr. Tyrold is charmed by her humor, and Sir Hugh impressed with the care she shows to the servants and horses of neighboring gentry, the ever-strict Edgar, alarmed by her irreverence, wants Camilla to be friends instead with women happily tethered within heterosexual disciplinary structures, women like Lady Isabella Irby.

Of course, this independence from the heterosexual economy is what makes Mrs. Arlbery's penchant for the ludicrous so attractive. The same holds true for the foppish Sir Sedley, a "bachelor" similarly detached from domestic ideology, and who appears as a fixture in the highly unconventional household at the Grove. Though spared the homophobic opprobrium that befalls Clermont, he is supposed to seem feminine and frivolous rather than manly and serious. Yawning and lounging rather than attentively ceding his chair to ladies, Sedley is anything but a chivalrous male. Indeed, once he becomes one, he loses all his charm. When Sedley rescues Camilla from runaway horses, his sensibility is masculinized. And while this episode implies a solidly natural basis for gender—in vigorously exerting his good nature on behalf of a lady in distress, Sir Sedley casts aside "the effeminate part he was systematically playing" (C 404) and restores his heart to its original, unaffected state—it also reinitiates the same old problem, for brought within the heterosexual economy, Sir Sedley becomes irksome to Camilla. Until then, however, the excesses of his sensibility, indulged frankly as play, are enjoyed without harmful consequences. Compared to the duty-driven repression that obtains elsewhere, the freedom with which Arlbery and Sir Sedley banter appears positively wholesome. Though their alliance, like Edgar's and Camilla's, is on-again-off-again, their sparring is conducted openly as a game, and accordingly calls our attention to the younger pair's inability to talk to one another. The campy hyperbole that particularly marks Sir Sedley's mock disapproval of Mrs. Arlbery—"O shocking! shocking! killing past resuscitation! Abominably horrid, I protest!" (C 364)—serves as a foil to the dourer anguish Edgar feels looking upon Camilla, anguish which he never registers as the excess it is.

Disdaining the categories "romance" and "novel" on the grounds that they signify "a mere love story," Burney preferred to think of *Camilla* as "*sketches of Characters & morals, put in action.*"[24] But her "sketches" finally yield to the romantic plot after all, and in the process put Mrs. Arlbery and the Grove out of Camilla's reach. The vastness of Burney's canvases here and elsewhere enables her to articulate subversive counterpossibilities,

but these are always left suspended in outlying areas, while the central composition affirms dominant values. In *Camilla,* as I have argued, that affirmation comes at such a high cost that it seems to take away with one hand what it has (too) profusely granted with the other. The plethora of concluding marriages, for example, flouts the convention by glutting it incredibly: Indiana's elopement with Macdersey, ironically, makes sense enough; but Lavinia compliantly accepts Hal Westwyn, whom she does not know; Eugenia is paired with Melmond, the worshipper of female beauty; and Camilla's marriage to Edgar is more or less posthumous, her conciliatory story, "the fullest, most candid, and unsparing account of every transaction of her short life" (C 902), sounding for all the world as though she had already died. Yet precisely because *Camilla* purports to be a sober sketch of manners as they occur in the historical present, its critique of sentimentality comes up against the same difficulty female camp generally does: given the currency of already excessive norms, how can the monstrous excess it depicts be recognized as such? In *Udolpho,* Radcliffe solved this problem not only by availing herself of the defamiliarizing properties of gothic genre, but also by textualizing rupture, compelling the reader to register the unbridgeable difference between Emily's story and the true "HISTORY OF SIGNORA DI LAURENTINI."

But *Camilla* does not solve the problem because the problem itself offers a solution to Burney's own ambivalence. *Camilla* makes it possible not to stumble over the shifting ground. Without any of the self-discrediting irony of the Austenian narrator of *Mansfield Park* who quits the "odious subjects" of "guilt and misery," Burney's narrator here commends "the virtuous Tyrolds" and "the beneficent Sir Hugh" (C 913), and even restores to favor the repentant Marchmont, as though the bases on which they have functioned as norms had not been called into doubt by the foregoing tome. Although Burney is now typically read as a satirist of propriety, contemporary reviewers, to say nothing of a number of distinguished scholars of our own century, read *Camilla* as a contribution to conduct literature, and their view is not completely wrong.[25] Wounded by the less than enthusiastic reception of her novel in the *Monthly Review,* Burney appears to have been flattered by the acknowledgment of her stature as an instructress of young females: "The recommendation at the conclusion [of the review] of the Book as a warning Guide to Youth would recompense me, upon the least reflection, to whatever strictures might precede it."[26] If it is possible to read the monstrosity of dutifully endured pain in *Camilla* as a testament of extravagant loyalty to dominant values rather than as a protest against them, it is because Burney herself was equivocal.

Vindicating the Wrongs of Woman: The Wanderer

The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties (1814) is a work of gigantic ambition and bewildering failure. As its earliest reviewers noted, the novel in some ways continues along the novelistic course Burney had charted for herself ever since the publication of *Evelina* thirty-six years earlier, detailing the peregrinations of a young heroine buffeted by the nastiness of her world. It is, moreover, rich in those quintessentially Burneyan scenes of preposterous embarrassment—scenes in which a heroine's worst fears about being exposed, humiliated, and misunderstood come true one after another, all through no real fault of her own, and invariably in front of the very people she most wants to impress. One after another, Evelina, Cecilia, Camilla, and Ellis/Juliet are mistaken for prostitutes, thieves, madwomen; they are embarrassed by vulgar companions who cling like burrs; they are entangled in compounding debt; they are "caught" accepting the attentions and assistance of one man when those of quite another are earnestly wished. Like the eruption of the body into forbidden sneezes, these nightmares-come-true testify to the heroines' internal resistance to a regime of judgment which charges them unfairly, but which they are far too good ever to protest, except, paradoxically, through the very excess of their submission.

In the best Burneyan tradition, *The Wanderer* longs to do what its heroine steadfastly refuses to give herself permission to do: complain. Like Burney's earlier heroines, the Wanderer too is caught up in a baroque concatenation of misleading appearances, and is ever in need of a vindication she cannot herself credibly supply: no lady ever can. But the word "vindication," which ripples through the novel, alerts us to what makes *The Wanderer* so ambitious, because it is a red flag in the polemical lexicon of the 1790s. Here the experience of *mauvaise honte*—of helplessly looking bad when one wants so desperately to look good—is invested with all the porten-

tous grandeur of political apocalypse, for it is caused not by intricate misunderstandings that can emanate from the mannerly courtship plot, but by the French Revolution. Set during "the dire reign of the terrific Robespierre" (WFD 11), *The Wanderer* takes up all the most violently contested issues of the 1790s—political justice, tyranny, liberty, class, sex, property, prejudice, reason, sentimentality, promises, suicide, game laws—and attempts to set them to rest. In it, the French Revolution transforms sympathetic and farcical characters alike into amateur political philosophers, rethinking and redescribing their social practices, in order to arraign or defend them. As a result, all their once most commonplace behaviors and most natural-seeming priorities—their treatment of servants, their payment of bills, their sexual mores, their style of dress, their modes of entertainment, their manners to strangers—appear frantic, strange, and unseamed, for political rupture has exposed their ideological function. The novel's ambition is to bring the heroine's tribulation into conjunction with the upheaval of the French Revolution and its aftermath in England. Its failure is that it cannot finally determine a consistent basis on which to do so.

Burney apologized for turning her pen to "political topics" normally "without [her] sphere" by asserting the sheer impossibility of doing otherwise: "To attempt to delineate, in whatever form, any picture of actual human life, without reference to the French Revolution, would be as little possible, as to give an idea of the English government, without reference to our own, for not more unavoidably is the last blended with the history of our nation" (WFD 6). Burney, it would appear, *wants* to "leave all discussions of national rights, and modes, or acts of government" to others, but simply cannot do so, because her domain—the delineation of "actual human life" in the last decade of the eighteenth century—has been "unavoidably" politicized, whether she, or anybody else, liked it or not.

In 1814, the public decidedly did *not* like it. The long-awaited appearance of *The Wanderer* promised to be an event of importance in the literary world, and the likes of Godwin, Byron, Madame de Staël, and Austen were eager to get copies. But the apparent disappointment of readers such as these, along with very negative reviews by Hazlitt and John Wilson Croker, plunged the novel into ignominious oblivion soon after it appeared. Had it been published closer to the turn of the century when it was first conceived, and alongside other polemical novels—Wollstonecraft's *The Wrongs of Woman, or, Maria,* Mary Hays's *Victim of Prejudice,* Amelia Opie's *Adeline Mowbray,* Jane West's *Tale of the Times,* and Elizabeth Hamilton's *Memoirs of Modern Philosophers*—it would not have seemed unusual. By 1814, however, the stuff of the novel had lost the urgency of topicality, and was yet still too recent to seem quaint. To a nation settled in reaction and more preoccupied with Napoleon than Robespierre, a novel replete with characters pontificating about the rights of man must have seemed dated indeed, but one

which recurred to the rights of women seemed downright perverse—even the sympathetic reviewer for the *British Critic* observed that "few of our female readers can remember the *égalité* mania, which once infested the bosoms of their sex."[1] Wollstonecraft had been dead since 1797, and the wave of anti-jacobin sentiment in response to Godwin's scandalous *Memoirs* (1798) had subsided for some time.[2] *The Wanderer* is thus a belated novel, striving to have the last word on controversies no one cared about. Except Burney. The polemical fiction and nonfiction of the 1790s had conspicuously theorized gender. Burney was unwilling to let this legacy go because it licensed her to treat woman's place in society with a degree of abstraction and specificity unknown to her earlier work. At the same time, precisely because that period was, in Burney's own words, "completely past" (WFD 6) and therefore (she hoped) beyond controversy, her safety in assaying so charged a topic seemed assured. Designed to expose what the novel, with that clobbering emphasis typical of the period, describes as the "DIFFICULTIES" encountered by the "FEMALE" in British society, *The Wanderer* is essential reading for feminist literary historians as well as for anyone interested in the culture of revolution and reaction. But because the novel is known well only by Burney enthusiasts, a summary is in order.

Having made her way to England by begging admission to a boat of English subjects fleeing France during the Terror, a young lady is unaccountably obliged to get by on her own without divulging "her birth, her name, her connexions, her actual situation, and her object in making the voyage" (WFD 41), indeed without even hinting why she must be so reserved. This mysterious personage—we know her first as L.S., then Ellis, and at last under her real name, Juliet—poses fundamental questions about woman's place in society: having lost the purse which had provided for her survival, she journeys from house to house and class to class in search of honorable subsistence. Although she is willing to labor in demeaning capacities—as a lady's companion, music teacher, seamstress—Ellis/Juliet finds her projects menaced by the compromising sexual predations of men, even the best of whose offers of money have strings attached, or (more trying still) thwarted by the mean-spiritedness of women. No helpless ingenue in the tradition of Evelina, Ellis/Juliet is a judicious woman, capable of understanding herself and others. But though she possesses all the internal resources necessary to get by in adversity, she is negated by people whose customs make no honorable provisions for independent, working women. Thus, all of her dazzling advantages—she has youth, beauty, misfortune, and a seemingly endless array of female accomplishments to recommend her—avail her nothing in a world which regards her namelessness and lack of relation as grounds for suspicion rather than compassion. Despite these hardships, however, Ellis/Juliet never swerves from the path of female rectitude, and certainly never concurs in the radical social criticism of the Wollstonecraftean antiheroine, Elinor Joddrel,

criticism which illuminates Ellis/Juliet's difficulties. True, Ellis/Juliet cannot help but ask from time to time, "What is woman,—with the most upright designs, the most rigid circumspection,—what is woman unprotected?" (WFD 344). But she is too virtuous to venture into critique by answering her own question, much less by opposing what her feminist counterpart, Elinor, terms the "thraldom" (WFD 399) of delicacy in which women languish.

By the end of the novel we learn that stupendously self-sacrificing virtue accounts for everything that has appeared irregular about Ellis/Juliet. Just before the outset of the novel, Ellis/Juliet narrowly escaped the clutches of one of Robespierre's commissaries, a man who, in order to get her fortune, had forced her into marriage by threatening to kill her reverend patron, the Archbishop. Thus, upon reaching England, Ellis/Juliet had to conceal her identity in order to protect the Archbishop from her "husband's" vengeance. The novel concludes after this "husband," who had journeyed to England to hunt her down as a runaway wife, is arrested, carted back to France, and is executed as the result of power struggles there. When the Archbishop soon thereafter lands safely in England, he avers that Ellis/Juliet's luckily unconsummated marriage was invalid all along and documents the illustriousness of his ward's birth, and with that her great wealth and prestige. Ellis/Juliet is finally free at last to marry a man of feeling, and to live happily ever after, putting the spitefulness and parochiality of her many detractors to shame, and generously rewarding the very few persons and the one dog who treated her kindly when she was friendless.

The Wanderer's most recent critics have rescued the novel from the obscurity in which it has lain for some 175 years, and have mounted powerful cases for its untimely mastery, its feminist politics, and its superiority to polemicizing.[3] By contrast, I maintain that the novel wholly partakes of the rupture it addresses, and that its interest lies precisely in its failures of mastery, for these failures disclose the corrosive and impossibly *difficult* claims sentimentality could make even on one of its most dutiful subjects. As this synopsis indicates, *The Wanderer* pulls in several different directions. To begin with, the Wanderer's "DIFFICULTIES" are represented as originating in causes and constraints so exceptional that they cannot be considered to be the basis for social criticism: even if "females" may lose their purses, as the Wanderer does twice, for example, they don't usually have to conceal their names or to place themselves beyond the recourse law can provide. Moreover, the ludicrously elaborate lengths to which the novel goes to clear Ellis/Juliet from the faintest whiff of transgressiveness indicates an anxiety about offending the same received notions the novel seems to protest. Consider, for example, the rather too numerous ways in which Ellis/Juliet is cleared from the marriage which she, with fastidious integrity, was prepared to accept as legitimate. We are assured, first, that her nuptial ceremony was secular, rushed, and cur-

tailed; second, that she was forced into it; third, that she never consented to it even under compulsion; fourth, that the union was never consummated; and fifth, that her "husband" is dead anyway. A textbook study in overdetermination, this surplus of explanation only confirms what the novel elsewhere challenges: a husband's right over the person of his wife.

Burney's handling of Ellis/Juliet's performance in the private theatrical betrays a similar inhibition about pushing too hard at the standards of female propriety. The fact that Ellis/Juliet is more or less forced as a household dependent to act in *The Provoked Husband* clears her of having any unladylike desire to shine in public. Thus the wondrous display of her talents, which wins her admiration and applause, is permissible because involuntary. But since, as Ellis/Juliet elsewhere insists, a talent for acting betokens sexual corruption in women, we must be assured that Ellis/Juliet isn't *that* good after all. She falters during her first scene, and her representation of Lady Townly is captivating only because of "her own disturbance," not because she possesses any real, hardened talent for acting: "This . . . was nature, which would not be repressed; not art, that strove to be displayed" (WFD 95). Arguing on one hand that Ellis/Juliet is marvelously talented and on the other that she is not acting, Burney takes back with one hand what she gives with the other. Rather than stretching our notions of what a woman can do without sacrifice to propriety, she tightens the stranglehold of propriety itself.

More divided still is Burney's treatment of class. In relentlessly satirizing the characters who persecute Ellis/Juliet despite all the evidence of her elegance, the novel assails the inhumanity of the British class system, which authorizes the ill-treatment of persons who are "mere nothing" (WFD 258). As postrevolutionary social criticism, this satire seems modestly progressive, even if it might by implication seem to countenance the shabby treatment of women who, unlike Ellis/Juliet, do not play the harp and piano, sing, act, or possess the skill of good penmanship, a refinement over which one character makes a big fuss. Elsewhere, however, the narrator denounces "liberty's two occupations,—plucking up and pulling down" (WFD 110), dramatizing how servants treat their betters with disrespect once "the forms of subordination" are "broken down" (WFD 136). Ellis/Juliet never proves her nobility more effectually than when she puts uppity servants in their place by asserting her right to give them orders, or when she awes her haughty oppressors with a dignity that shows she was not born to consider abuse her portion. So too with race. As Mrs. Ireton's companion, Ellis/Juliet takes her place besides "a young negro, who was the favourite, because the most submissive servant" (WFD 479). Because Ellis/Juliet first appears in blackface, Burney seems prepared to dramatize the homologous inflections of race, class, and gender, and having herself been a dependent at Court forbidden to sneeze, much as the black man here is forbidden to laugh, she suggests a solidarity with the

racially oppressed from which radical criticism might emerge. But Burney's juxtaposition of the "young negro" with Ellis/Juliet only recuperates her class and racial superiority. Whereas "poor Mungo" falls to his knees, trembles, and begs forgiveness of the despotic woman who torments him, Ellis/Juliet, when similarly tormented, never sinks to obsequiousness, but instead calmly offers to resign. Wherever race, class, gender, and political stripe are at stake, critique gets strangled in the plethora of the novel's counterexamples, and the novel's very immensity impedes rather than extends insight. In all these cases, I detect neither a protodeconstructive strategy to expose how apparently opposing positions partake of the same logic nor even a simpler determination to complicate our political thinking, but rather a wish to protest the effects of social injustice while making sure that the social structures, customs, and attitudes that produced them remain intact.

The Wanderer pulls its punches because Burney has conflicting investments in the social and political controversy that inspired her to write it. And the novel shows the strain most fatally in its treatment of "FEMALE DIFFICULTY" itself. From the moment of its appearance this was a sore point. The novel's earliest reviewers could not believe that Ellis/Juliet's DIFFICULTY was commensurate with the dignity Burney attempts to confer upon it, and they respond with a disgust suggestive of a sense of contamination. For Croker, the novel itself is a female body, an "old coquette" out to seduce him by the "wild tawdriness" of its plotting: "The Wanderer has the identical features of Evelina—but of Evelina grown old; the vivacity, the bloom, the elegance, 'the purple light of love' are vanished; the eyes are there, but they are dim; the cheek, but it is furrowed; the lips, but they are withered."[4] Hazlitt too cannot see why Ellis/Juliet's difficulties are such a big deal, though, unlike Croker, he chalks them up to a silliness expressly designated as female. Like a boy who feels degraded at having to remain in the company of tiresome old aunts, Hazlitt regards the time spent with this novel as time spent unmanned. *The Wanderer* depicts a feminized world, that is to say, a world of petty punctilio where "the whole is a question of form, whether that form is adhered to, or violated." The design to show how a woman is thwarted by assaults on her virtue and her reputation was doomed from the outset: "The difficulties in which she involves her heroines are indeed 'Female Difficulties;'—they are difficulties created out of nothing." Instead of sympathizing with the heroine's sensitivity to others' approval and disapproval of her, Hazlitt bristles with manly impatience at her excessive dependence on their opinions: "Her conduct never arises directly out of the circumstances in which she is placed, but out of some factitious and misplaced refinement on them."[5] As Hazlitt sees it, female difficulty is definitionally inane.[6]

What is so peculiar about *The Wanderer* is that it is implicated in the same misogyny that damned it. A 1790s novel written after the fact, *The*

Wanderer is perforce committed to the politics of reaction and the sentimental practices that underwrite it. As if it were possible to rewrite Wollstonecraft's *Wrongs of Woman* from within the values of dominant culture, *The Wanderer* exhibits FEMALE DIFFICULTIES in all their specificity up and down the social ladder. Its inevitable if highly ambivalent allegiance to dominant values, however, makes it not only impossible to complain about women's wrongs but also imperative actually to vindicate them. The progressive design of eliciting pity for a forlorn female torn from her home and friends, persecuted rather than succored in the land of chivalry, and debarred from the means to self-sufficiency thus works at cross-purposes with the conservative design to discredit Wollstonecraftean arguments about women, to show the justice of admittedly imperfect traditions and practices, and to restore wandering woman to the place which custom—with a wisdom that exceeds our feeble reason—has marked out for her. But this apparently simple polemical task turns out to be impossible since woman's place has already been disrupted, not simply by antisentimental "jacobin" feminism but also by reactionary sentimentality itself. The resulting tension between and within these designs is disastrous for women, for the political necessity of upholding established customs involves hedging the wish to ameliorate the plight of women so severely that *The Wanderer* ends up blaming women for everything, including their difficulties, and even these are not their own.

Small wonder, then, that Croker and Hazlitt have a hard time crediting the inflated claims made on behalf of Ellis/Juliet's distress. *The Wanderer* too has difficulty with female difficulty. As we have seen, this difficulty is in part the legacy of sentimental ideology. The novel begins with a conspicuously suffering heroine whom no one will help, notice, or credit. But the ante has been upped. The opening sentence locates the novel during the Terror, and the Wanderer's first utterance is a simultaneously conventional and excessive incitement to pity that bears an obvious resemblance to the scene Burke painted in order to galvanize English chivalry and to mobilize the nation into counterrevolution: on the shores of a nation already weltering in blood, a female voice cries out in the dead of the night, "Oh leave me not to be massacred!" (WFD 11). Charity and humanity are the appropriate responses to the appeals of distressed womanhood, but almost all the people who hear this entreaty would just as soon abandon her to destruction. To us, her appeals are like a gigantic whack upon the patella of sentiment. To most of the travelers, the stimulation is not so pointed nor so irresistible. Marie-Antoinette's woe interests "our" sentiments in part because she is "half-naked," just as Adeline's entreaties in *Romance of the Forest* work because a loosened gown discloses her "glowing charms." But the Wanderer is not immediately legible as a highborn beauty in distress. She seems African (she is disguised in blackface), though she later becomes European; she seems wounded (her head is swathed in bandages), though within a few moments

she is unharmed; she seems to be lowborn (she first appears in rags), though she later is refined; she seems to be a Catholic (she is first taken to be a nun), though she later says she is protestant; she seems ugly, though later she becomes resplendently beautiful. As if the crisis in France has shaken all identity categories—race, class, gender, nationality, religion—the Wanderer is reluctantly equivocal, with no choice but to enact a scandal and to appear in drag—indeed, she had even dressed like a man during an earlier stage of her escape from France. As a result, her distress seems as inauthentic as everything else about her. No matter that the extremity of her wretchedness is a test to pity, making her like the hag in fairy-tales who turns out to be a gorgeous princess after the handsome prince proves he can love her, warts and all. Her abasement only arouses the contempt of her fellow travelers. Once she refuses their demand for prurient narrative (opting not to regale them with "stories of those monks and abbesses" whose sufferings at the hands of mobs were reported in British newspapers and pamphlets), she is grossly ridiculed for her nationality (a "native enemy . . . a spy for our destruction" [W 25]), her race (she is a "black insect" and a "grim thing" [WFD 27]), and her class ("She can be nothing above a house-maid" [WFD 17]).

It might appear, then, that the Wanderer's torments are caused by a lack of sentimentality rather than by sentimentality itself, but this is not the case. The age of chivalry is not quite dead after all. A man of true feeling—his name, Harleigh, places him squarely in the sentimental tradition—speaks on her behalf, and a gallant old Admiral intervenes to protect her: "[S]ince she is but a woman, and in distress, save her, pilot, in God's name! . . . A woman, a child, and a fallen enemy, are three persons that every true Briton should scorn to misuse" (WFD 12). The Admiral's rugged decency here and throughout the novel is welcome. It is effectual, authoritative, and parental. Accordingly, his is the only help she accepts from a man, and since he turns out to be her long-lost uncle anyway, anything compromising about her having incurred debts to him is canceled out. Still, chivalry is part of the problem, for according to its rules, distress both qualifies and disqualifies a woman's claims to solicitude. Having praised her sturdiness and piety aboard the ship—Ellis/Juliet alone neither vomits nor complains while crossing the Channel—when the Admiral encounters her lamenting the loss of her purse after landing, he declares that a woman becomes a royal pain the moment she fails to take her troubles like a man: "Well! a woman can be but a woman! However, unless you have a mind to see all my good opinion blown away—thus!—in a whiff, you won't think of drooping, now that you are on British ground" (WFD 25).

Although the novel obviously disowns his contention that women's moral weakness rather than the naughtiness of men causes their suffering—"The devil himself never yet put it into a man's head, nor into the world's neither, to abandon, or leave, as you call it, desolate, a woman who has kept

tight to her own duty" (WFD 37)—it validates his outlook on female "vapouring" (WFD 24) and "drooping" (WFD 25), and this comes dangerously close to the same thing. Indeed, one of Ellis/Juliet's first ordeals is putting up with Mrs. Ireton, the sensitive lady who martyrs Ellis/Juliet by making her "the repository of all her complaints, whether against nature, for constructing her frame with such exquisite daintiness, or against fate, for it's [sic] total insensibility to the tenderness which that frame required" (WFD 42). Female drooping revolts Ellis/Juliet more than it does the Admiral. Chivalry constrains a man's hand even when his good sense might prompt him to slug an offending harridan: "A lady . . . must have the liberty to say what she pleases, a man's tongue being as much tied as his hands, not to annoy the weaker vessel, so that, let her come out with what she will, she is amenable to no punishment" (WFD 25–26). But since a woman can, after all, be but a woman, a man of feeling must have patience with her frailty. Ellis/Juliet is not so obliged: "The Incognita had no superfluous pity in store for the distresses of offended self-importance" (WFD 42).

The Wanderer thus accepts rather than criticizes the debased status of female sensitivity, establishing the legitimacy of Ellis/Juliet's sensibility by delegitimizing that of other, "mere" women. Having done this, Burney is able to endow Ellis/Juliet with more affect than she has ever permitted her earlier heroines. Evelina's youth and ingenuousness spare her the duty of heroic self-command, but Cecilia and Camilla must inure themselves in the conflict between duty and desire. Ellis/Juliet gets to have it both ways. Scorning the trivial sensitivity of other women, she may both serve as a pattern for exceptional self-control and break away from such self-control with impunity—fainting, blushing, stammering, disclosing somatically and with perfect clarity what she (unlike Elinor, the feminist) is too virtuous ever to declare openly: her blighted love for Harleigh. But the cost of this legitimizing tactic is dear. Rather than establishing Ellis/Juliet as representatively "FEMALE," it unsexes her, insisting with respect to her feelings, as well as to virtually everything else, that she is extraordinary, thus depriving us of any basis from which to generalize about her suffering.

In *The Wanderer,* the same womanly liability to distress that is supposed to solicit the sentiments on which political order depends is also presented as such a standing feature of her nature—"Well! a woman can be but a woman"—that its excess carries no meaning, and can be contemplated without alarm or credence. Although Burney's representation of life within this degrading problematic is reminiscent of *Camilla, The Wanderer* makes the extravagant female difficulty there look like child's play. Camilla denies herself to satisfy her father's standards of propriety, but Ellis/Juliet's suffering is a matter of the Archbishop's life and death. And because, given the specific political context, the Archbishop's abstraction enables him to stand in for all paternal figures beset by revolutionary violence, more depends on her con-

senting to the negligibility of female distress, and refusing to regard *her* difficulties as either extreme or as particularly female. Moreover, and related to this, the authoritative males, for whose sake a heroine embraces both her distress and her dutifully unsexing inurement to it, have disappeared from *The Wanderer*. In stark contrast to Burney's previous novels, in *The Wanderer* the rule of fathers and their surrogates has retreated. The Archbishop is indeed a sentimentalized figure of male power requiring female rescue, but he is almost entirely offstage.

This attenuation—taken to the verge of disappearance itself—can in part be accounted for in terms of the infirm, no longer redoubtable Dr. Burney. But to represent authority as aged and receded was also, as we have seen, a basic strategy of sentimental authority. While always insisting on the legitimacy of absolute monarchy, Burke had in many places in the *Reflections* depicted the state as an aged father, before whose infirmities we should tremble, and whose frailties we should protect as chivalrously as the nakedness of the queen. Such was Burney's own tack in *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy* (1793). Written to raise money for Catholic priests who were expelled by the French revolutionary government on August 25, and who fled to England as exiles from militant atheism, Burney's pamphlet employs high sentimental rhetoric to incite female gallantry. Writing in broken, quasi-gothic prose in order to render the confused onset of savage ferocity, Burney evokes the nightmare of "ruffians" penetrating a church and molesting priests with pikes in a manner that recalls Burke's description of the attack on the queen's bedchamber, and also his description of an assault upon nuns at the opening of his "Case of the Suffering Clergy in France" (1792).[7] But while Burke drops the nuns to focus on the priests, arousing respect for them by stressing their dignity and their class, Burney feminizes the priests by identifying them with women, stressing their old age and their defenselessness, hoping that "those white hairs" scorned by the bloody intruders will move British ladies to "pity."[8]

The absentiation of male power is an extreme effect of sentimentality itself. In face of this, the heroine's problem is not averting a father's disappointment, but encountering a world devoid of his dear presence. Croker is a horrible critic, but his outrage over the implausibility of Burney's plot helps us recognize the novel's distinctiveness. The world nightmarishly imagined in *The Wanderer* is destitute of fathers as well as of any authoritative males, such as justices of the peace and clergymen, and of the institutions they run, such as parish poorhouses, prisons, churches, let alone the private homes on country estates. Harleigh has such authority, it is true, but since he is too "interested" in Ellis/Juliet, delicacy prohibits him from exerting it on her behalf. No other responsible agents of established authority are here. Lord Melbury is a juvenile, treated like a boy requiring protection from wily female fortune hunters; Lord Denmeath, working behind the scenes to block

Ellis/Juliet's legitimation, works mostly through his surrogate, Mrs. Howel, and is present only sporadically; and the power of the Old Admiral, Sir Giles Arbe, and Sir Jasper Harrington is intermittent and severely undercut by (respectively) archaicness, idiocy, and senility.

If the sacred victimage of an absent, archetypical male overshadows female helplessness, has the site of potency been left clear for women to take over? Burney's other novels explore this possibility, recurring to the figure of the virile woman—Mrs. Selwyn, Mrs. Delvile, or Mrs. Tyrold—to embody the rationality, discipline, and effectuality men lack. In *The Wanderer*, women indeed hold sway, but their rule is never manly, but rather, alas, all too feminine—that is, irrational, out of control, ineffectual. Mr. Scope—the political philosopher—scarcely talks of much else, and criticizes French revolutionaries precisely for sanctioning the feminine. In particular, he disapproves of the Goddess of Reason: "The ladies in general," he intones, "not being particularly famous for their reason . . . I cannot much commend their sagacity, taken in a political point of view, in putting the female head, which is very well in its proper sphere, upon coping, if I may use such an expression, with a male" (WFD 269). A stereotype drawn from the pages of antijacobin fiction, Scope is a petit bourgeois who, fancying himself a deep thinker, has no business with affairs beyond his scope. By this broad ridicule, Burney might seem to imply a converse wish to vindicate women's minds, and with that their ability to rule wisely, even if in a limited sphere. But the political coding here, and throughout *The Wanderer,* is a muddy matter. Burney mocks Scope's pretention, but not his judgment: his opinion about female rule—shared, incidentally, by the good Admiral, who despises "petticoat government" (WFD 24)—is ridiculed because it is obvious, not because it is absurd.

The Wanderer bears out Scope's wariness about women's head for power. Upon reaching shore, Ellis/Juliet quests specifically for "female protection" (WFD 39) both because she must ensure her anonymity by retreating to the private sphere and because she expects women to be the gallant as well as the tender sex, kin to the audience of women Burney had conjured in *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy*: women rich in the "resource" of "FEMALE BENEFICENCE"; women whose hearts, not hardened by commerce with the world, render them more sensitive than men to the refinements of virtue, and hence readier to relieve "necessitous distress."[9] Much to her chagrin, however, she discovers that British women are marred by the same "despotic hardness" (WFD 492) that disfigures Mrs. Ireton. Those empowered to give are not disposed to do so. If anything, they are Ellis/Juliet's persecutors. Though she is sometimes importuned by the mischievous lust of men, their harassment is clumsy and almost perfunctory in comparison to the gruesome torment women routinely visit upon her, over which the novel lingers in part because the ineptitude of men has become

such a given.

In the apparent absence of any effectual male authority, every political position has been feminized. In the following passage, for example, a committee of women in charge of organizing concerts parodies the democratic procedures of the revolutionary committee in France, bullied by Robespierre:

> A committee of ladies was formed, nominally for consultation, but, in fact, only for applause; since whoever ventured to start the smallest objection to an idea of Miss Arbe's, was overpowered with conceited insinuations of the incompetency of her judgment. . . . This helpless submission to ignorant dominion, so common in all committees where the leaders have no deeper science than the led, impeded not the progress of the preparations. (WFD 305)

Here, as elsewhere, polemical discourse is startlingly unsteady. Miss Arbe is not, as this passage leads us to expect, damned as a figure of revolutionary terror, for midway through she is suddenly recast as a figure for efficiency of absolute monarchy: "Concentrated, or arbitrary government may be the least just, but it is the most effective. Unlimited in her powers, uncontrouled in their exertion, Miss Arbe saved as much time by the rapidity, as contention by the despotism of her proceedings" (WFD 305).

What can we make of Miss Arbe's penchant for bullying her neighbors? We are invited to frame her politically, but the frame changes so rapidly that her status as a political figure loses focus. While political allusion in her case serves to satirize women's governance, elsewhere the narrator appears to scorn women for their "personal vanity": "The good of a nation, the interest of society, the welfare of a family, could with difficulty have appeared of higher importance than the choice of a ribbon, or the set of a cap" (WFD 426). Women here are chastised for being so absorbed in trifling minutiae that they cannot recognize the moral priority of such larger, extrapersonal spheres as family, society, and nation. But only a few pages later, the same women who are scolded here for their obliviousness as to the very existence of the political realm are damned for thinking too politically. In the following passage, for example, Ellis/Juliet's female coworkers are cast as reactionaries who insist that Ellis/Juliet comply with the practices that constitute their social happiness, while Ellis/Juliet herself appears as a would-be revolutionary holding long-standing customs in contempt. The "work-women" consider Sundays "as rightfully dedicated, after the church-service, to amusement with one another; and Juliet, in refusing to join in a custom which they held to be the basis of their freedom and happiness, appeared to them an unsocial and haughty innovator" (WFD 434).

Although, as these passages show, Burney savages all manner of women from every possible direction, for the most part women in *The Wanderer* are associated with egregious misrule, representing collectively what the narrator

says specifically of Mrs. Ireton, "the many, though terrible characters, who think superiour rank of fortune authorises perverseness, and legitimatizes arrogance; who hold . . . the display of ill-humour to be the display of power" (WFD 489). In contrast to *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* which places Emily under the roof of three different men, *The Wanderer* exposes Ellis/Juliet to the rule, or rather, the violent whim, of three women—Mrs. Maple, Mrs. Howel, and Mrs. Ireton—and each is more insolent, ill-judging, and tyrannical than the next. Mrs. Maple issues "forth her mandates, without examining whether they could be obeyed; and had uttered her threats, without considering whether she could put them into execution" (WFD 211). Having the weight of Lord Denmeath behind her, Mrs. Howel is more formidable, though she too is finally no more than shrewish despite her attempts at command. Acting solely on her own behalf rather than as the representative of a titled family, Mrs. Ireton is the safest target of social criticism, and against her Burney is relentless. Tormenting everyone in her house (toddler-heir and lapdog alone excepted), she is a caricature on the one hand of female sensibility—"Has nobody any salts? any lavendar-water?" she cries in "pathetic appeal" to her toadies. "How unfortunate it is to have such nerves, such sensations, when one lives with such mere speaking machines!" (WFD 481); and on the other, of wanton cruelty, threatening her servant with shipment "back to the West Indies" and with "orders that you may be striped till you jump, and that you may jump,—you little black imp!—between every stripe!" (WFD 482).

If Mrs. Howel is the lackey of the titled class, Mrs. Maple a forger of unjust "shackles" (WFD 152), and Mrs. Ireton a practitioner of "slavery" (WFD 474) whose very house—characterized "by bolts, bars, dungeons, towers, and bastilles" (WFD 475)—is an emblem of oppressive rule, then it seems reasonable to conclude that the misrule women exemplify is associated with the old regime, and that Burney uses misogyny to advance mildly progressive social criticism. But Burney's codings are not nearly so unitary and coherent as this, for the feminization of misrule turns out to transcend political coloring. Despite important gradations of class difference among the female heads of household presented here, Burney conceives them as variations on the choleric type—the Admiral calls them the "three Furies" (WFD 872)—and as persons incapable of moderation and reason. Whether seething in "speechless rage" (WFD 44) like Mrs. Ireton, marching in "high wrath" (WFD 89) like Mrs. Maple, or quivering in "inexorable ire" (WFD 133) like Mrs. Howel, these turbulent females are contemptible despite and because of their shrillness. So much, indeed, has the indignity of rage been presented as feminine, unfitting women for rule, that when we meet Ellis/Juliet's "husband"—a man who is "swearing," whose face "is distorted with fury," and whose mouth is "foaming" (WFD 734)—he and the revolutionary terror he represents seem feminine too, even though he is asserting his male rights as a

husband, and even though those rights are honored.

Of course, this is not the first time that women of sensibility have epitomized bad power. Such was Wollstonecraft's position in *Vindication of the Rights of Men.* Mrs. Ireton walks off the pages of Wollstonecraft's attack on "fair ladies" who invent "tortures" which "the captive negroes curse in all the agony of bodily pain" and who "after the sight of a flagellation, compose their ruffled spirits and exercise their tender feelings by the perusal of the last imported novel" (VRM 45). The difference, of course, is that in ridiculing women as both victims and agents of tyranny, Wollstonecraft challenged "the dignity, the infallibility of sensibility" (VRM 45), radically criticizing the decadence of male desire and the politics premised on it. Burney, by contrast, treats women as scapegoats for men, and as a result averts radical social criticism, for by presenting social problems as the result of female excess, the institutional power of patriarchy is spared direct criticism despite its ultimate responsibility for the Wanderer's trials as a woman without a father's name. Assailed because they have too much political consciousness, and because they have none; because they are bullies, because they are followers; because they are too powerful, and because they are impotent; because they have too much feeling, and because they are hard of heart, women are doomed to an ideologically overdetermined insufficiency. They cannot do anything but be difficult.

Men, then, continue to occupy sites of good power even though they are absent, and their monopoly is so firm that women's virtue, rare to begin with, can only be represented as an emulation of male sentimentality. Fascinated by Ellis/Juliet's performance in *The Provoked Husband,* Lady Aurora behaves like a young man enthralled by an actress, and her attentions to Ellis/Juliet pirate heterosexual gallantry. Because she is secretly married, Ellis/Juliet must be wary of men's attentions, and besides, as the Admiral proved, male chivalry gives as much pain as it does relief. The chivalry of females, by contrast, lets her be a woman: fainting into Lady Aurora's bosom, Ellis/Juliet leans "against her waist, which her arm involuntarily circled, breathed hard and shed a torrent of tears" (WFD 98). This distress "interests" Lady Aurora, and when Ellis/Juliet thanks her "with so touching a softness, with tearful eyes, and in a voice so plaintive," she becomes her paladin, desiring "still to support her, and entreating that she would hold her by her arm" (WFD 98) while escorting her to her bedchamber: "'Miss Ellis knows,' cried Lady Aurora, offering her arm, 'who is to be her chevalier'" (WFD 100).

It is impossible to read these, or any descriptions of Lady Aurora's and Ellis/Juliet's relationship without confronting the ecstatically homoerotic space opened out by warps in sentimental ideology itself. Although Burney's plots are typically structured around the quest for paternal reconciliation, the yearning for the intimacy of maternal and/or feminine sympathy is a far

deeper and more potent element in them. The mainspring of *The Wanderer*—a wandering heroine searches for "female protection" (WFD 39)—gives structural prominence to this need, which recurs with all the intensity of repetition compulsion. Though drawn to enveloping relations with women, Burney seems to have feared their irregularity acutely enough to censor them, for in *The Wanderer* this relation is not once but twice recontained. Burney heterosexualizes it first by deflecting it onto Lady Aurora's brother, Lord Melbury, who shares his sister's ardor, and whose erotic excitement is more articulable, though less delicate, and hence (again) a problem. Second, like Radcliffe in *The Italian*, Burney brings homoerotic fervor within the bounds of the patriarchal family: as we know only at the end, the reason Ellis/Juliet is seized with a fainting spell here—and thus also the reason their love-at-first-sight may be viewed as nonthreatening—is that she has just realized that she and Lady Aurora are half sisters, that they have the same father.

Ellis/Juliet's travels in quest of work or charity are calculated to occasion reflections on the sorry state of English society, which cannot succor a forlorn FEMALE. But because women have so much sway, the novel becomes a critique of their domination rather than their difficulties: even Lady Aurora—Ellis/Juliet's "chevalier"—must obey when Mrs. Howel forbids their converse. But Burney is not content to attribute the flaws in female domination to their inherent termagancy and then to have done. Rather she demonstrates how their misbehavior follows from "narrow prejudice" (WFD 113), understood first as a prepossession in favor of class, and next as a reflexive submission to customary practices. This endeavor to rationalize its criticism of female rule confounds the novel, for the logic of its misogyny runs counter to the logic of its conservatism. Casting herself upon "female protection," Ellis/Juliet seeks help where she is least likely to find it, for given a society of women who, like Miss Arbe, "never spoke nor acted, but through the medium of what she believed the world would most approve to hear her say or see her do" (WFD 214), her singularity poses an insuperable challenge. Harleigh, evidently not blinkered by this medium, moralizes on prejudice as though it were a distinctively feminine vice:

> O powerful prejudice! . . . what is judgment and where is perception in your hands? The ladies of this house, having first seen this charming Incognita in tattered garments, forlorn, desolate, and distressed; governed by the prepossession thus excited by her inferiority, even, to this moment, either neglect or treat her harshly; not moved by the varied excellencies that should create gentler ideas, nor open to the interesting attractions that might give them more pleasure than they could bestow! While these visitors, hearing that she is a young lady of family, and meeting her upon terms

> of equality, find, at once, that she is endowed with talents and accomplishments for the highest admiration, and with a sweetness of manners, and powers of conversation, irresistibly fascinating. (WFD 105)

Harleigh's apostrophe makes Ellis/Juliet's admirers look as arbitrary as her detractors, carried along by appearances, without thinking for themselves. Women appear entirely to be creatures of opinion, like timid herd animals who follow the leader, rather than rational creatures forming their own judgments. A patently second-rate mind, Selina Joddrel, for example, is contemptibly on-again-off-again towards Ellis/Juliet, according to which way the winds of opinion are blowing: when Ellis/Juliet is in favor with village ladies who believe she is a family friend rather than a penniless stranger, Selina is effusively affectionate; once the scandal breaks, she pretends not to know her when they meet in public. In *The Wanderer* all women share Selina's submission to the tyranny of opinion. Ellis/Juliet cannot support herself by teaching music, after all, because no mother will send her daughter to a "nobody," however gifted. Even the independence of the great Lady Kendover is illusory. Though women "of quality" like her are less liable "to be controlled by the futile fears of the opinion of a neighbourhood, which awed Mrs. Maple," she too is "bounded," judging merit in terms of compliance with received notions, and thus patronizing only those who are already successful: "To go further,—to draw forth talents from obscurity, to honor indigent virtue, were exertions that demanded a character of a superiour species; a character that had learnt to act for himself, by thinking for himself and feeling for others" (WFD 229). Can the shift to the masculine pronoun be fortuitous? Can "a character of a superiour species" able "to act for himself, by thinking for himself and feeling for others" be other than a man?

Depicting women's way of thinking about and acting in society as narrow-minded and custombound, *The Wanderer* not only invites but shares the kind of misogyny that prompted Hazlitt, as we have already seen, to damn the novel, and since that misogyny has a political rationale that goes to the heart of the novel and its problems, we will consider it in detail. Hazlitt's derision of Burney sounds disturbingly like Burney's own derision of the generality of her sex. Burney, he writes,

> is unquestionably a quick, lively, and accurate observer of persons and things; but she always looks at them with a consciousness of her sex, and in that point of view in which it is the particular business and interest of women to observe them. . . . Women, in general, have a quicker perception of any oddity or singularity of character than men, and are more alive to every absurdity which arises from a violation of the rules of society, or a deviation from established custom. . . . They are more easily impressed with whatever appeals to their senses or habitual prejudices. The intuitive per-

> ception of their minds is less disturbed by any general reasonings on causes or consequences. They learn the idiom of character and manner as they acquire that of language, by rote merely, without troubling themselves about the principles.[10]

Contemporary estimates of the female intellect typically ran along gender hierarchies similar to those Hazlitt sets up here. But whereas some commentators make scale of vision the primary mark of distinction,[11] Hazlitt foregrounds an ultimately related but discrete distinction between prejudice and reason, between habitual submission to rules, and a comprehension of principles about them. Expressing a superiority to "established custom" and the "rules of society," Hazlitt's remarks on women's entrenchment in habit and rules, their hostility to deviance, and their inability to reflect abstractly on principles amount to an indictment of their reflexive social conservatism.

In this light, it is odd that Hazlitt never mentions the politics of *The Wanderer*. Had he done so, I suspect that he might have recognized how what he describes as owing to gender per se is really an effect of a much larger rift occasioned by the French Revolution itself, a rift Burney builds into her novel as an ideological problem she must resolve. The openly conservative reviewer for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, by contrast, treats the competing claims of prejudice and reason not as results of sexual difference but as aspects of the counterrevolutionary political agenda of the novel, applauding Burney's satire on Elinor Joddrel, the novel's "genuine Republican and Free-thinker" who fancies herself "released from all human prejudices," and congratulating Burney for bringing about this character's eventual conversion "to the good old maxims from which she had been perverted" by having attended to the abhorrent "doctrines" which "the French themselves now blush to remember."[12]

What distinguishes these different assessments of *The Wanderer* is the position *prejudice* as a political category occupies within them, for after Burke prejudice was the criterion that distinguished "jacobins" from "anti-jacobins." Burke made "prejudice" a rallying cry of counter-revolution by changing it from a mark of intellectual shame into a badge of political virtue: "in this enlightened age I am bold enough to confess, that we [English] are generally men of untaught feelings; that instead of casting away all our old prejudices, we cherish them to a very considerable degree, and, to take more shame to ourselves, we cherish them because they are prejudices; and the longer they have lasted, and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cherish them" (RRF 138). Denoting a process through which dominant values become incorporated into political subjects, ingrained into their affective make-ups by generations of practice, prejudice becomes a sort of shorthand for sentimentality itself. The reliance on received opinion, the submission to untaught feelings over abstract reasoning, and the dependence

on custom as a guide to behavior and policy are celebrated as the very stuff of English manliness in a world where there isn't anything outside or above ideology, where the very forms about which Hazlitt speaks so disdainfully are all we have to clothe our nakedness.

The Wanderer fails to represent "FEMALE DIFFICULTIES" intelligibly because it attempts to have it both ways on the subject of prejudice. Insofar as the novel suggests that Ellis/Juliet's hardships are caused by narrow-minded women scandalized by her noncompliance with customs, it uses prejudice as a pejorative and genders that prejudice feminine, exactly as Hazlitt does. But, rejecting Burke's politics along with the reconfiguration of gender those politics entail, Hazlitt's misogyny at least has ideological consistency to recommend it. To him, sentimentality brings about not the masculinization but rather the feminization of affect, with that its degeneration into petty factitiousness; his suffocation within a world so feminized implies a desperate wish for the fresh winds of masculine reason to dispel the stale perfumed air of feminine prejudice. But Burney's commitment to reactionary politics excludes Hazlitt's logic. If the necessity of shielding established practices from assault required her, as we have already seen, to deflect criticism from men and their institutions to women and their misrule, it also required her to vindicate Burkean prejudice. But this in turn deprives her criticism of women of any real justification: since reactionary politics itself had "masculinized" and dignified prejudice, finding a basis on which to criticize women's prejudice becomes vexed.

Burney foregrounds this conflict when airing the radical political philosophy of Elinor Joddrel, who always denounces prejudice. To the reader encountering *The Wanderer* for the first time, Elinor's failure to support Ellis/Juliet seems weirdly hypocritical: after all, isn't Ellis/Juliet also a woman out of bounds, a woman not like other, "mere" women, but a victim of their prejudice, and hence worthy to be protected by another superior and unconventional woman such as herself? But repeated readings clarify Elinor's irritation: "Put aside your prejudices," Elinor scolds, "and forget that you are a dawdling woman, to remember that you are an active human being, and your FEMALE DIFFICULTIES will vanish into the vapour of which they are formed" (WFD 397). Elinor considers Ellis/Juliet's complaints as vapourish as Ellis/Juliet herself considers those of sentimental females because they too emanate from false refinement. Herself sharing the same standards of female propriety by which she has herself been erroneously prejudged, Ellis/Juliet winces at their disapproval, and is unable to "act"—in both senses of this term—to alleviate her distress. Conscious of her unassailable virtue, her surpassing genius, and her singular exigencies, she can take to the stage as a professional actress or musician and thus achieve the "independence" she craves. But Ellis/Juliet refuses this avenue because of social prejudices against the undignified publicity and meretriciousness of the stage itself.[13] True, liv-

ing in disguise and under an assumed name, Ellis/Juliet already is an actress. But it has taken a revolution of cataclysmic magnitude to bring this unseemliness about. Far from considering herself as emancipated from class- and race-bound prejudices about femininity, she rues the embarrassment the Revolution has caused her.

No wonder Juliet is irked that a woman so "endowed with every power to set prejudice at defiance, and to shew and teach the world, that woman and man are fellow-creatures" is "coward enough to bow down, unresisting, to this thraldom" (WFD 399). In her view the "French Revolution" is a "noble flame that nearly consumed the old world" (WFD 152), and she owes to it her "enfranchisement from the mental slavery of subscribing to unexamined opinions, and being governed by prejudices that I despise" (WFD 173) as well as her drive to vindicate the "Rights of woman," that is, "the Rights of human nature; to which the two sexes equally and unalienably belong" (WFD 175). Unlike Ellis/Juliet, then, Elinor actually wants to unsex herself, and does so by acting—putting on *The Provoked Husband* is her idea—and even more specifically by acting up, that is by repudiating female modesty. Elinor flouts this single most crucial principle of sexual difference by openly declaring her passion for Albert Harleigh. No sooner does she stage this revolution in gender definition by avowing an unsolicited love, however, than her body stages a counterrevolution of its own:

> She stopt, and the deepest vermillion overspread her face; her effort was made; she had boasted of her new doctrine, lest she should seem impressed with confusion from the old one which she violated; but the struggle being over, the bravado and exultation subsided; female consciousness and native shame took their place; and abashed, and unable to meet the eyes of Ellis, she ran out of the room. (WFD 154)

If the ability to be the first to avow love is sign of sexual difference, it takes more than the mere French Revolution to unsex a woman. Elinor's doctrines might hold that there is no distinction between man and woman, but fair or unfair, the body insists upon the difference: "female consciousness and native shame" resume their control over Elinor's body, confirming the prejudices she sought to explode. In casting Elinor as a would-be suicide to unrequited love, Burney, then, is both fictionalizing Wollstonecraft's self-immolating passion for Imlay as Godwin had divulged it in the *Memoirs,* and emphasizing the inherence of prejudices about gender within the body itself: expunging one requires extinguishing the other.[14]

The status and the gender of prejudice thus bring Burney to a profound impasse. On the one hand, Harleigh, the novel's apologist for reactionary politics, is disgusted with female prejudice particularly as it has warranted the inhumane treatment of Ellis/Juliet, and he tries to rouse women from bovine conformity to moral independence by proclaiming the feminine char-

acter of charity: "Who is the female—what is her age, what her rank, that ought not to assist and try to preserve so distressed a young person from evil?" On the other hand, as Burke had so shockingly alleged, Englishmen should be proud to declare themselves sluggish, bovine cudchewers (RRF 136). Prejudices about female propriety defended elsewhere in *The Wanderer* militate against the active and unconventional agency he urges here. Harleigh's responsibility as a man who understands politics and philosophy is to deprogram Elinor, restoring her "to prudence and to common life" and rendering her "contented to exist by the general laws of established society" (WFD 206). As he earlier averred, these "common" and "general" rules do not allow "a single woman" to "act publicly for herself, without risk of censure" (WFD 106). Ellis/Juliet aspires to independence out of dire necessity ("Those, only, are fitted for the vicissitudes of human fortune, who, whether female or male, learn to suffice to themselves" [W 220], the Archbishop admonishes her, irrelevantly); and Elinor aspires to independence out of political enthusiasm ("throwing off the trammels of unmeaning custom, and acting, as well as thinking, for myself" [W 151]). But in either case, female independence is impermissible, given women's duty to honor "the customs of their ancestors, received notions of the world, the hitherto acknowledged boundaries of elegant life" as well as "the feelings—say the failings, if you please,—the prejudices, the weaknesses of others" (WFD 343). The "track of female timidity" (WFD 343) is "long-beaten" and not even a woman as gifted as Ellis/Juliet or as "noble, though perhaps . . . masculine" (WFD 863) can deviate from it.

What, then, can differentiate the prejudice at which we are supposed to sneer from the prejudice we are supposed to honor? If prejudice encodes the latent wisdom of the ages, on what grounds can we blame the women of Brighton for failing to stray from the beaten track to think and act for themselves? Harleigh implies the answer in part when he begs Ellis/Juliet not to judge him to be "narrow minded" (WFD 338). Presumably because Harleigh—unlike Mrs. Maple, Mrs. Ireton, Mrs. Howel, Selina Jodderel, Miss Arbe, and the rest—can understand his prejudice as an abstraction, and rationalize it as a political principle, his prejudice is dignified, enabling him to see more rather than less than women, whom prejudice blinds to exceptional merit, as is witnessed by his unique ability to recognize all the signs of Ellis/Juliet's elegant upbringing and feminine delicacy. *His* prejudice, in other words, is the fruit of wide, supposedly rational, and independent thinking about the "ties formed by the equitable laws of fellow feeling" from which "we are never emancipated" (WFD 339); *theirs* on the contrary is supposedly irrational, "narrow minded," and abject. Burney thus resolves the ideological conflict of *The Wanderer* by reinscribing gender difference with a vengeance precisely where sentimental ideology had erased it, positing separate masculine and feminine inflections of prejudice. The dignity of senti-

mental ideology itself is in the process reclaimed, but at the cost of an escalating disparagement of women and their difficulties.

The Wanderer is haunted by a question Ellis/Juliet is compelled to ask when her trials get the better of her: "What is woman?" (WFD 344). Neither she nor Burney can answer this question, and not only because we have no provisions for thinking about or assisting women who are on their own, but also because the ascendancy of sentimentality has entailed the masculine occupation of formerly feminine sites of victimage, tenderness, prejudice, and even dependency. Burney's attempt on the last page of her novel to sum up her heroine as "a female Robinson Crusoe" (WFD 873) is symptomatic of the problem that has nettled her novel from the start. The phrase "female Robinson Crusoe," as Doody has noted, is "both plangent in its suggestion of loneliness, and satiric. For the poor woman who tries to earn her own living, contemporary England is a desert island."[15] Burney authorizes this reading when she writes that Ellis/Juliet is "as unaided and unprotected, though in the midst of the world, as that imaginary hero in his uninhabited island" (WFD 350). And yet the comparison is also curiously unruly, refusing to work smoothly because Ellis/Juliet, unlike Crusoe, rarely *is* alone. Although she toys briefly with the idea, at the Archbishop's bidding, of course, she is never permitted to think of herself as a Crusoe-like figure answerable first and only to herself, but rather is always placing herself amidst an intricate web of ties and relations which very severely circumscribe her freedoms. But when we describe the Wanderer in this way, we have described sentimental man as well. As Harleigh explains it, even though a man may be "independent" in the sense that his "actions are under no controul," he still must honor his "Relations" (WFD 339), and their sway extends even beyond the grave, drawing us into a network of tradition that is more important than our measly, however more "enlightened" notions. Burney's attempt to specify her heroine as a "female Robinson Crusoe"—an attempt which itself registers gender ambiguities—founders, then, because under sentimentality men are already female Robinson Crusoes. What, after all, is even more striking than the fact that the world is no home for a woman "cast upon herself" is the fact that it is no longer acceptable to fantasize about the conditions under which man, cast upon himself, could be alone either—independent, autonomous, self-sufficient and self-determining, transforming his very desolation, as Defoe's Crusoe did, into the occasion of his empowerment, sovereignty, and pleasure. Now, such freedom is the dementia of the political radical—Elinor waxes enthusiastic over "the grand effect . . . of beholding so many millions of men, let loose from all ties, divine or human" (WFD 156)—while the wiser Ellis/Juliet, agreeing with Harleigh, refuses independence for anyone, regardless of sex: "Who is permitted to act by the sole guidance of their own perceptions and notions? who is so free,—I might better, perhaps,

say so desolate,—as to consider themselves clear of all responsibility to the opinions of others?" (WFD 296).

Woman is thus simultaneously nothing (FEMALE having come to designate everything debased and contemptible) and everything (the Wanderer's condition that of the male political subject as well). It is no wonder, then, that Ellis/Juliet cannot answer her own questions about woman's definition, or that she "hazarded not any reply" (WFD 399) to Elinor's positive and radical accounts of the subject. Caught at every turn between the wish to deplore female difficulties and the political imperative of defending the practices that cause them, *The Wanderer* has no choice but to reaffirm gender in more and more intolerably degrading forms. That reaffirmation itself, however, is difficult. Since "a woman can be but a woman," any endeavor on the one hand to stray outside the boundaries of gender definition, as the "masculine" Elinor does, must be deemed insanely transgressive—and accordingly, after trivializing Elinor's politics by attributing them to the gloom of sexual disappointment, Burney contrives her recantation of heterodoxy. But on the other hand, as the novel so profusely demonstrates, to be contented to remain within feminine boundaries of gender, as the ladies of Brighton are, is thoroughly despicable. Doing neither, Ellis/Juliet is an equivocal being.

In his damning review of *The Wanderer,* Croker called Burney a "*mannerist*" and in *The Wanderer* in particular a "mannerist" who is "epuisée." We needn't endorse Croker's viciousness, let alone his assumed entitlement to nubility in females and their fiction, in order to accept the justice of this remark. *The Wanderer* is a prodigiously studied novel, laboring towards stupendous effects, and the effort shows. There were many reasons for this. As even unsympathetic reviewers attested, in 1814 Burney was the most eminent living novelist, one who had not published a novel in eighteen years, and the pressure to surpass herself after so long a silence must have been enormous. Moreover, because *The Wanderer* places itself quite self-consciously at the end of a tradition that took exceptional violence and excess as its premise, it required even more outlandish plotting and high-flown language to attain the grandeur and pathos at which it aimed.

But I suspect that the colossal effort of *The Wanderer* owes most to Burney's wish to get beyond the problem that animates it. Her decision to have Ellis/Juliet chased down at Stonehenge exemplifies this desire, shifting the whole novel from politics to myth, from the infinitely exacerbated present to the ageless and "undisquisitionable," to borrow Burney's own term for Stonehenge.[16] The backdrop of Stonehenge underscores the awfulness of "rite:" fearing that her worse-than-pagan wedding may be valid, Ellis/Juliet never retreats a hairsbreadth from her exorbitantly exacting sense of duty, and we are to commend her readiness to accept her "shackles" (WFD 862) and to accede without complaint to laws which place the "droits" of a

"mari" over the "rights of humanity" (WFD 727). But by staging her arrest at this "wild edifice" (WFD 765), Burney also seems intent on establishing a meaning for Ellis/Juliet's ordeal beyond the sordidness of disputes about the property rights husbands have to wives, and on intimating some larger, staggering, and impenetrably mysterious truth about human sacrifice.

This strain shows even more conspicuously in the episode calculated to serve as the novel's climax: the long conversation between Harleigh and Elinor about the immateriality and immortality of the soul. Modeled in part after *Hamlet* and in part after the penultimate chapter of *Rasselas,* where other wanderers likewise ponder the sentience of matter, the nature of the soul, and the likelihood of life after death, this debate persuades the feminist radical to desist in her schemes of suicide and to accept the truths of Christianity. Harleigh effects this conversion by inducing Elinor to consider how "every particle" of matter—even "this dust" into which the materialist assumes everything "will be mouldered or crumbled"—may "possess some sensitive quality" and thus have the capacity to feel pain (WFD 786). The prospect of atomistic hypersensitivity, experienced even by the very ground we walk on, proves so horrendously un*dis*provable to Elinor that she gladly accepts the conversely unprovable but much preferable promise that the body and soul separate after death, the one perishing and the other "mount[ing] to upper regions, and enjoy[ing] purified bliss" (WFD 793).

As philosophical disquisition, this episode is excruciating, and the more so because its gestures towards intensity—for example, rejoinders like "Harleigh, you electrify me! you convulse the whole train of my principles" (WFD 792)—miscarry. More important than Burney's failure, however, is the rationale of her attempt, for this episode seeks not merely to apologize for orthodoxy, but also to use that orthodoxy as a way to get over the problem that challenges it politically. Elinor accepts the prospect that the "air is peopled with our departed friends, hovering around us," and that "the unencumbered soul" watches "over those it loves," finds "again those it had lost," and is elevated "to joy, to sweetest reminiscence, to tenderest reunions, to grateful adoration" (WFD 793–94) because it offers long-awaited respite from pain caused by injustice here below. Granted, Harleigh's representation of a joyful afterlife is radically inconsistent with his representation of relations beyond the grave elsewhere in the novel. "Wound not the customs of [your] ancestors" (WFD 343), he had admonished Ellis/Juliet, clearly implying dead spirits are as susceptible to pain as the sentient particles he had invoked in order to scare her into Christianity. But Elinor has not read *The Wanderer,* and does not notice this contradiction. Instead she looks forward to assuming membership in a community without the materiality of bodies, to sentimentality without the pain of gender.

Burney concludes her career, then, where Wollstonecraft began it in *Mary, A Fiction,* looking forward to a "world *where there is neither marry-*

ing, nor giving in marriage" (M 68). But whereas this wish prompted Wollstonecraft to venture outside the boundaries of sentimentality and female propriety and into counterpolitical action, Burney, conducting her critiques from within sentimental culture, uses it finally to bypass politics, ignoring the fact that the suprapolitical vision of immortality Harleigh offers already has a sentimental, conservative politics written into it. *The Wanderer; or, Female Difficulties* attempts to rewrite *The Wrongs of Woman* by vindicating those wrongs, by upholding traditional notions of gender even as her own novel protests them, and by deferring our happiness to another time; but it finally succeeds only at witnessing to the unnegotiable DIFFICULTY of gender itself.

Jane Austen

"Not at all what a man should be!": Remaking English Manhood in *Emma*

I began this book about politics, sentimentality, and gender in late-eighteenth-century fiction by observing how Austen's achievement seemed to erase that of her slightly older contemporaries. For many years, it was universally acknowledged that Austen defined herself negatively vis-à-vis the figures I gather here, shunning the plots of Wollstonecraft's radical feminism, Radcliffe's exaggerated gothicism, and Burney's escalated melodrama, and opting instead to exercise the cameoist's meticulously understated craft. But effects are not intentions. In *Northanger Abbey,* that novel which was to have been her first published work, Austen launches into a spirited defense of her chosen genre over and against those who would decry it as "only a novel." Rather than proceed through negations, she inaugurates her career by asserting solidarity with a distinctively feminine tradition of novelists that developed in the late eighteenth century, a tradition in which Burney and Radcliffe ranked very high. Though Wollstonecraft remained an unmentionable throughout Austen's career, there is ample evidence that she too was a figure Austen reckoned with. Indeed, in many respects *Emma* actually succeeds at Wollstonecraft's grand aim better than Wollstonecraft did: diminishing the authority of male sentimentality, and reimmasculating men and women alike with a high sense of national purpose.

This claim may sound highfalutin'. Given the lingering grip of janeism in Anglophone culture, however, virtually any large claim about Austen tends to sound excessive and desecratory.[1] Besides, no less discriminating a critic than Lionel Trilling himself advanced a similar thesis in 1957, when he declared that *Emma* "is touched—lightly but indubitably—by national feeling." With its tribute to "English verdure, English culture, English comfort," *Emma* tends, as Trilling put it, "to conceive of a specifically English ideal of life." As it so happens, Trilling also regards Emma as what I have been calling an

"equivocal being": "The extraordinary thing about Emma," he argues, "is that she has a moral life as a man has a moral life." Beyond alluding to de Tocqueville now and then, however, Trilling is not interested in pondering what these assertions mean historically. By calling *Emma* an "idyll"—a genre he considers definitionally cut off from "real" history—he forecloses the possibility that *Emma* may be enmeshed in the national ideals of its period, just as he insists that Emma's manliness has no relation to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century debates about women's rights when he remarks that she possesses it not "as a special instance, as an example of a new kind of woman, which is the way George Eliot's Dorothea Brooke has her moral life, but quite as a matter of course, as a given quality of her nature."[2] For Trilling, these assertions remain at some distance from each other: there is and can be no connection between Emma's manly moral life and *Emma*'s "national feeling." By historicizing the treatment of femininity *and* masculinity in *Emma*, I will attempt in the following pages to integrate the arguments about female manliness and national feeling which Trilling keeps apart, and in the process to show that Austen engages the work of her predecessors more positively and more intricately than is generally supposed.

In part because Austen's canonization—unlike Wollstonecraft's, Radcliffe's, or Burney's—was so steady and so assured, we have had as a rule very little historical imagination about her and about our relation to her. Before considering the subjects of nationality and gender in *Emma* it will be instructive to review Austenian commentary on this subject as well. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's paper "Jane Austen and the Masturbating Girl" was savagely attacked in the press for having violated the monumentally self-evident truth that Austen had the good fortune to predate such indecorous sexual irregularities as homo- and autoeroticism. In her novels, the supposition runs, men are gentlemen; women are ladies; and the desires of gentlemen and ladies for each other are unproblematic, inevitable, and mutually fulfilling.[3] As any full-time Austenian knows, however, a lively and explicit interest in the sexual irregularities of Emma Woodhouse has been the stuff of "establishment" criticism for almost fifty years now. Indeed, Trilling's assertion about Emma's manliness was certainly the least original thing about his essay. For post–World War II critics writing on Austen immediately before Trilling did, Emma was as "unsexed" a female as any of the heroines I have assembled here. The difference between late eighteenth- and mid-twentieth-century notions of what it means to be "unsexed" is that discourses of deviance drawn from psychoanalysis came to occupy this category during our century, so that far from signifying immodest heterosexuality, it has now meant being homosexual, manhating, and/or frigid. The sexual ambiguities of Radcliffe's and Burney's happily or unhappily equivocal heroines were, to be sure, spared commentary on their deviance by literary scholars only because no one paid attention to them at all. Wollstonecraft was not always

so lucky. In *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex* (1947), Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia Farnham maintained that modern-day "feminists" too were unsexed, and that they had Wollstonecraft to thank for their debilitatingly "severe case of penis-envy."[4]

Postwar discussions of Emma Woodhouse were rarely as clinical as that of Lundberg and Farnham, but they were fixated on Emma's lack of heterosexual feeling to such a degree that Emma's supposed *coldness* became the central question of the novel: was Emma responsive to men? could she ever really give herself in love, and thus give up trying to control other people's lives? would marriage "cure" her? Ever since Edmund Wilson's review essay "A Long Talk about Jane Austen" (1944), Emma was commonly charged with lesbianism. Wilson does not actually use the l-word, but his attention to Emma's lack of "interest . . . in men" and to "her infatuations with women"—along with his allusion to a certain, unspecified "Freudian formula"—makes his point clear. Pooh-poohing G. B. Stern's and Sheila Kaye-Smith's book *Speaking of Jane Austen* (1944) for treating characters as "actual people . . . and speculating on their lives beyond the story," Wilson does the same, arguing that Emma's offstage lesbianism is that "something outside the picture which is never made explicit in the story but which has to be recognized by the reader before it is possible for him to appreciate the book." In the following meditation on the conclusion, especially as it relates to Knightley's imprudent decision to move in at Hartfield, Wilson trails off into a fantasy about ménages-à-trois that threaten the domestic and erotic sovereignty to which a husband is entitled:

> Emma, who was relatively indifferent to men, was inclined to infatuations with women; and what reason is there to believe that her marriage with Knightley would prevent her from going on as she had done before: from discovering a new young lady as appealing as Harriet Smith, dominating her personality, and situating her in a dream-world of Emma's own in which Emma would be able to confer on her all kinds of imaginary benefits, but which would have no connection whatever with her condition or her real possibilities. This would worry and exasperate Knightley and be hard for him to do anything about. He would be lucky if he did not presently find himself saddled, along with the other awkward features of the arrangement, with one of Emma's young protegées as an actual member of the household.[5]

Try as Wilson did to dignify his commentary by differentiating it from the merely gossipy discussions of the women critics he is reviewing, his dilatory sixth-act fantasy about Emma's extramarital infatuations with women and her autonomy from male authority is on a par not only with Miss Stern's effusions but also with Miss Bates's. And like Miss Bates's prattle, I hasten to add, Wilson's here is in its own way exceedingly sensitive to the drama rep-

resented or hinted at in the novel.

On the subject of Emma's sexual irregularity, Marvin Mudrick is Wilson's direct descendant. For him, Emma's "attention never falls so warmly upon a man" as on Harriet, whom she observes "with far more warmth than anyone else." Wilson's discussion of Emma's homosexuality, though aligned in sympathy with a husband bewildered to find himself displaced by a woman, nevertheless takes the liberal tone of a man of the world. Mudrick is more censorious: Emma's interest in women is pathological, stemming from the same defensive fear of commitment, the same detachment, and the same need to control that he diagnoses in Austen herself on virtually every page of *Irony as Defense and Discovery*: a woman's emotions ought to be passionately committed to a man, even if this means she might not, then, wish to write brilliant novels. But when Mudrick's scolding ceases, his discussion of Emma is astute: "Emma's interest in Harriet is not merely mistress-and-pupil, but quite emotional and particular: for a time, at least . . . Emma is in love with her: a love unphysical and inadmissible, even perhaps undefinable in such a society; and therefore safe.[6] Without knowing and certainly without intending it, Mudrick verges here on a theory of the closet: aware that sex and gender are not equivalent, and alert to the relation between sexuality, gender, and social power, he suggests that sexuality is a discursive practice: "inadmissible" forms of sexuality become undiscussable, "undefinable," and therefore under certain circumstances, even "safe."

Wilson's and Mudrick's essays on *Emma* had an incalculable impact on Austen studies from the 1950s through the mid-1970s. Their work is discernible, as we have already seen, in Trilling's Introduction to *Emma;* they are also behind Mark Schorer's widely reprinted "The Humiliation of Emma Woodhouse" (1959), which accepts the gothically strained love of Jane Fairfax for Frank Churchill as wholesome and normal and treats Emma's chilliness as a pathology deserving of the wondrously salubrious humiliation heralded in his title;[7] and finally they are the targets of Wayne Booth's indignation in his "Control of Distance in Jane Austen's Emma" (1961). This immeasurably influential essay, which links an intensely normative reading of Emma to the genre of fiction itself, attacks Mudrick and Wilson for suggesting that Emma "has not been cured of her 'infatuations with women'" and thus for doubting that "marriage to an excellent, amiable, good, and attractive man is the best thing that can happen to" her. For Booth—and a generation of Aristotelian-oriented formalists—the novel's comic structure and moral lesson are the same. Because heterosexuality is encoded teleologically onto a rhetoric of fiction, Emma's drama, her "development" and "growth" are inseparable from her learning to desire a man. Booth's rebuttal equates the perversity of women who indulge such "infatuations" with the perversity of novel critics who refuse to accept a happy ending when they see one.[8]

Clearly, a long time before feminists came along, "classic" Austenian

critics considered the sex and gender transgression of Emma their business. The generation of male academics returning to American culture after the war made Emma go the way of Rosie the Rivetter, and enforced imperatives of masculine dominance and feminine domesticity without examining the historical contingencies of these imperatives and their own investment in them. Pained as I am by the cheeriness of their misogyny, I also think they were basically right about Emma: quite susceptible to the stirrings of homoerotic pleasure, Emma *is* enchanted by Harriet's "soft blue eyes" (E 23, 24); displaying all the captivating enjoyment of "a mind delighted with its own ideas" (E 24), Emma *is* highly autonomous and autoerotic; and, finally, displaying shockingly little reverence for dramas of heterosexual love, Emma's energies and desires are *not* fully contained within the grid imposed by the courtship plot. By restoring Austen to the specific social and political context I have been reconstructing throughout this book, we can examine in a more sustained and responsible way the slippages of sex and gender which post–World War II critics discussed by fits and starts.

Emma indeed pays conspicuous attention to gender definition. But whereas mid-twentieth-century critics were mostly preoccupied with Emma's waywardness as a woman, *Emma* itself evinces amazingly little anxiety on the subject. This omission itself is highly unusual, and it demands an explanation. Many late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century novels responded directly to Mary Wollstonecraft and/or her "disciple" Mary Hays by introducing into their novels protofeminists who challenged the ways in which sexual difference had been defined. In the same year Austen started *Emma* she also read Burney's belated *The Wanderer* (1814), where as we have amply seen, Elinor Joddrel torments herself as well as the women and men around her with her doomed feminist mania. Austen also knew and admired Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801), featuring the mannish Harriot Freke, who erupts into feminist diatribes. It is also likely that Austen read Charlotte Smith's *Montalbert* (1795), which includes an "Amazonian" who is (like Emma) destitute of vanity about her personal appearance and who exhibits other "symptoms of a masculine spirit" that make the proper heroine cringe with horror;[9] Elizabeth Hamilton's *Memoirs of Modern Philosophers* (1800), whose Bridgetina Botherim is a malicious spoof on Mary Hays; and Amelia Opie's more sympathetic *Adeline Mowbray* (1805), whose heroine strives not only for emancipation from specific sexual mores, particularly as these relate to the institution of marriage, but also for the autonomous, self-responsible "moral life" Trilling detects in Emma.

Considered in the context of these heroines, Austen's prediction that no one but herself would like Emma makes enormous sense. Although precedents for doing so were abundantly at hand, Austen never faults Emma's "masculine spirit." Postwar critics groove on what they are pleased to call Emma's *humiliation,* her *chastisement,* her *submission.* But *Emma* is not

interested in subjecting the masculine independence of its heroine to disciplinary correctives.[10] To be sure, Emma has flawed and unattractive ideas about the class structure of her world—and unlike her feminist prototypes, she is ridiculed for being too little rather than too much of a democrat—but we are never invited to consider her infractions against "femininity" per se to be the cause of her problem as a snob. On the contrary, the narrator trots out Emma's sister, Isabella Knightley, as a "model of right feminine happiness" (E 140), an indulgent mother and adoring spouse, as blissfully oblivious to the faults of her husband's temper as she is to the vapidity of her own conversation. Rather than pathologize Emma's deviations from "right feminine happiness," the novel introduces Isabella for the sole purpose of making Emma look better by comparison. The narrator says that Isabella's "striking inferiorities" (E 433) throw Emma's strengths into higher relief in Knightley's own mind. And when the novel explicitly describes Emma's behavior in ways that bend gender, it does so without the slightest hint of horror. As Mr. Knightley puts it, for example, taking care of Emma at Hartfield proves a sort of conjugal training camp for Miss Taylor: "You were preparing yourself to be an excellent wife all the time you were at Hartfield . . . on the very material matrimonial point of submitting your own will, and doing as you were bid" (E 38). While the strong-willed Emma here is a surrogate husband, claiming submission as marital privilege, elsewhere she comes near to usurping what Henry Tilney in *Northanger Abbey* called the exclusively male "prerogative of choice":

> "Whom are you going to dance with?" asked Mr. Knightley.
> [Emma] hesitated a moment, and then replied, "With you, if you will ask me." (E 331)

It is not necessary to overstate this point. Austen's Emma Woodhouse is not Hays's Emma Courtney, who proposes marriage outright. Unlike the latter and other protofeminist characters who occupy novels by Austen's contemporaries, Emma Woodhouse stops short of transgressing at least one very important gender rule: by the end of the novel, she finds herself in the certifiably orthodox position of having passively to wait to be proposed to. But the ending does not entirely cancel out what has come before, however it may delimit it. The novel basically accepts as attractive and as legitimate Emma's forcefulness. As Knightley says when comparing Emma's handwriting to that of others, "Emma's hand is the strongest" (E 297), and this observation is tinged with fondness rather than censure.

Where this novel *is* concerned with gender transgression, it is from the masculine, not the feminine side. What "true" masculinity is like—what a "man" is, how a man speaks and behaves, what a man really wants—is the subject of continual debate, even when characters appear to be discussing women. The following sampling is typical of the novel's tendentiousness on

the ever-recurrent subject *man*:

> "A man of six or seven-and-twenty can take care of himself." (E 14)
>
> "A man always imagines a woman to be ready for anybody who asks her." "Nonsense! a man does not imagine any such thing." (E 60)
>
> "There is one thing, Emma, which a man can always do, if he chuses, and that is, his duty." (E 146)
>
> "I can allow for the fears of the child but not of the man." (E 148)
>
> "General benevolence, but not general friendship made a man what he ought to be." (E 320)
>
> "She has not the open temper which a man would wish for in a wife." (E 288)
>
> "He is a disgrace to the name of man." (E 426)
>
> "A man would always wish to give a woman a better home than the one he takes her from." (E 428)

Emma attaches no opprobrium to the manly Emma, nor does it—unlike a novel such as *Mansfield Park*—dwell on the (contradictory) qualities typifying a truly feminine woman. But it persistently asks how a *man* should behave and what he ought to do. Committing itself to the discussion of true manhood and disparaging men who do not measure up, *Emma* demonstrates that manhood is *not*, as Trilling supposed, "a matter of course . . . a given quality" of a man's "nature," any more than manhood can ever be a matter of course of a woman's nature. This is my point. "Classic" Austenian critics assumed the constancy of feminine norms, and policed Emma's womanhood accordingly, but they sometimes cast an eye towards errant males too, even if they once again did not imagine that masculinity could be something the novel contests and constructs. Edmund Wilson appears to have been the first to call Mr. Woodhouse a "silly old woman," and this epithet has proved horribly durable. Mudrick once again follows suit when he declares that Mr. Woodhouse possesses no "masculine trait," that he is "really an old woman." Refraining from the grossness of name-calling, others beheld Mr. Woodhouse's anility with fascination or alarm. For Joseph Duffy, Mr. Woodhouse is "otiose and androgynous" much like Lady Bertram, a judgment echoed by Trilling years later. For Tony Tanner, on the other hand, Mr. Woodhouse is a gender-derelict of dangerous proportions, a "moribund patriarch," the "type of male who would bring his society—any society—to

a stop," the "weak emasculate voice of definitive negations and terminations." Mr. Woodhouse's transgressions—his "weak emasculate" qualities—would spell doom for all of society, if it weren't for the counterexample of Knightley, whom Tanner calls the "responsible active male."[11]

The assumption behind these readings is that there is one, continuous mode of manliness against which Mr. Woodhouse is to be judged and found lacking, though the assumption is at odds with their perception that manliness is already multiple and problematic. When Trilling attempted (and chivalrously so) to defend Mr. Woodhouse from Mudrick's attacks by insisting that in the novel he is a "kind-hearted, polite old gentleman," he was right in more ways than one: Mr. Woodhouse is both a kindly old gentleman and an old kind of gentleman.[12] We see his old-fashionedness first in his resistance to change—his desire to keep the family circle unbroken, his wish to retain the hospitable customs of his youth, his "strong habit of regard for every old acquaintance" (E 92); and second in his attitude towards women—as Emma puts it, Mr Woodhouse loves "any thing that pays woman a compliment. He has the tenderest spirit of gallantry towards us all" (E 77). Historically considered, far from being an unusual, deviant, emasculated, or otherwise deficient figure, Mr. Woodhouse represents the ideal of sentimental masculinity described throughout this book. The qualities that typify him—sensitivity, tenderness, "benevolent nerves," allegiance to the good old ways, courtesies to the fair sex, endearing irrationality, and even slowness, frailty, and ineptitude itself—also typify the venerated paternal figures crowding the pages of Burney and Radcliffe, to say nothing of those of Edmund Burke.

During the 1790s, a man's "benevolent nerves" carried a national agenda: they were formed by and guaranteed the continuation of the charm, the beauty, the hospitality, and the goodness of Old England itself, which liked its gallant old ways even if they did not make sense, and which won our love, veneration, and loyalty. In a world where the "age of chivalry" was ebbing, where the courtesies of the old regime were being displaced by the cold economic calculations of the new one, a Woodhousian man of feeling held out for civility; his attachment to the old ways preserved continuity and order, while qualities such as energy, penetration, forcefulness, brusqueness, bluntness, and decision were deemed dangerous, volatile, and cold. The heroically sentimental "man of feeling" presided over his neighborhood and family by virtue of the love he inspired in others, not by virtue of the power he wielded over them; his sensitivity legitimized his authority, enabling him to rule by weakness rather than force. In Burney's *Camilla,* Sir Hugh Tyrold never holds more sway in the minds and hearts of his extended family than when he weeps and takes to his bed—which happens rather often. In Radcliffe's *Udolpho,* St. Aubert flinches when Quesnel plans to hew down "that noble chestnut, which has flourished for centuries, the glory of the estate!"

(MU 13); his tears make his injunctions sacred to his daughter, just as his faintness and infirmity consolidate as well as conceal his authority, making him a fitter object of "gallantry" than a woman like Emily. And in Burke's *Reflections,* Englishmen like Mr. Woodhouse are proud members of a "dull sluggish race" (RRF 106), and are celebrated for their instinctive aversion to change, their frankly irrational attachment to prejudices because they are prejudices, and their fond love for their "little platoon," their attachment "to the subdivision" (RRF 97), to diminutive, pathos-driven units of national identity.

Emma is written after the crisis that launched the reemergence of male sentimentality had abated. In it, this tradition of sentimental masculinity is archaic, and it has become somewhat of a joke. Mr. Woodhouse is dearly beloved and fondly indulged, but his sensitivity is not revered. The novel works instead to redefine masculinity. We will miss what is distinctive about Austen's achievement if we assume that masculine self-definitions were givens rather than qualities under reconstruction. Critics commonly agree that Mr. Knightley represents an ideal, but what has *not* been adequately appreciated, I think, is the novelty of that ideal, for by representing a "humane" rather than "gallant" hero, Austen desentimentalizes and deheterosexualizes virtue, and in the process makes it accessible to women as well. Twentieth-century critics assailed Mr. Woodhouse for "effeminacy," and as unpleasant as this charge is in its blend of misogyny and homophobia, there is a good deal in *Emma* that corroborates it, although the novel is careful to spare Mr. Woodhouse the full brunt of such opprobrium and to deflect it onto Mr. Elton and Frank Churchill instead.

Knightley frequently faults men for crossing the masculine/feminine divide. It is Mr. Woodhouse who first refers to Mr. Elton as a "pretty fellow," and coming from Mr. Woodhouse, this is a compliment to Elton's dapperness. From Knightley's viewpoint, however—the viewpoint generally endorsed by the narrator—male prettiness is small, weak, and self-preening. Mr. Knightley finds the company of fellow farmers such as Robert Martin and William Larkins just as absorbing, if not more so, than the society of women; but Mr. Elton disgraces himself in his studied attentions to women. In *Emma,* gallantry—that generous loyalty to rank and sex—rather than representing the acme of manliness, is figured as an effeminating proximity with and submission to women, and as patently absurd. Unlike *Northanger Abbey* and *Mansfield Park, Emma* is permeated with petticoat government, and heroes here show their mettle not by standing up to men with power and authority, but rather by resisting tyrannical female rule. True: Mr. Knightley impresses Emma by his heroic rescue of Harriet-in-distress; but he also proves himself to be a man by bringing bossy women—like Mrs. Elton—up short. Indeed, when "the great Mrs. Churchill" not only henpecks her husband but also bullies Frank Churchill, Mr. Knightley complains that Frank

lacks the gumption to stand up to her like a man and to do what is right by that man, his father: "If he would say so to her at once, in the tone of decision becoming a man, there would be no opposition made to his going" (E 146). As Emma says, Knightley is "not a gallant man, but he is a very humane one" (E 223), and this means not only that he resists the encroachments of female authority, but also that he does not make a big deal out of sexual difference and the benevolizing sentiments that emerge from it in sentimental culture. Implying a counterdiscourse of "true feeling," *Emma* suggests in a most unBurkean way that "humanity" and gallantry are two different things. The "gallant Mr. Elton" by contrast damns himself when he avows that it is impossible "to contradict a lady" (E 42); when he takes care "that nothing ungallant, nothing that did not breathe a compliment to the sex should pass his lips (E 70), and when he "sigh[s] and languish[es] and stud[ies] for compliments" (E 49). As presented here, gallantry is intrinsically nonsensical: artificial and disingenuous, taking on the very femininity it courts. No man, as the logic of this novel would have it, talks or believes such rubbish. When Mr. Elton is alone among men, as Mr. Knightley informs us, he makes it clear that he wants to marry into money and that his attentions to the fair sex are only a means to this end, that he is not really a man of feeling at all.

Knightley waxes even more magisterially censorious on the subject of Frank Churchill, rebuking his derelictions from true manliness in highly loaded terms. Before Knightley even meets Frank, he predicts that he will be a "chattering coxcomb" (E 150). Manifestly, the word "coxcomb"—like "puppy," "foppish," and "trifling," which come up later—connotes the shameful insufficiency already lambasted in Mr. Elton. But the epithet "chattering" interests me more here, *chatter* being a word reserved for feminine speech (like Miss Bates's)—excessive, undisciplined, diffuse, frivolous—and applied to a man, it is an insult. I dwell on this because *Emma* pays a lot of attention to the language of true manliness. Privileging gender over class, Austen grants to Robert Martin what Frank Churchill lacks: a manly style of writing, where manly is defined (by Emma herself) as "concise," "vigorous," "decided," and "strong" (E 51)—*strong*, of course, also being the term Knightley uses to describe the manly Emma's hand.[13] Knightley delivers an emasculating blow to Frank Churchill when he declares of his handwriting, "I do not admire it. It is too small—wants strength. It is like woman's writing" (E 297). But Mr. Knightley casts what his company terms "base aspersions" on more than the mere size of Frank Churchill's handwriting. The related style of Frank's letter also degrades him as being somehow "like a woman." Having already remarked, and more than once, on the prolixity of Frank's final letter, Knightley goes on to censure its hyperbole: "He is a very liberal thanker, with his thousands and tens of thousands." The real man, it is implied here, is a man of few words. Whereas an earlier generation of sen-

timental men had made a spectacle of their affect—of honorable feelings so powerful as to exceed all possibility of control, thus saturating handkerchiefs and liberally bedewing eloquent pages—the manful Mr. Knightley retreats from display, cultivating containment rather than excess, and "burying under a calmness that seemed all but indifference" (E 99) the "real attachment" he feels towards his brother and towards Emma as well. And this new, plain style of manliness is a matter of national import, constituting the *amiable,* "the true English style," as opposed of course, to the *aimable,* the artificial, the courtly, the dissembling, the servile, and (as the tradition goes) the feminized French.[14]

It is the work of *Emma* to make Mr. Knightley seem traditional. Combining as it does the patron saint of England with the knight of chivalry, his name itself conduces to his traditional-seeming status. But as I hope I have indicated, he is not a traditional and certainly not a chivalric figure, and far from embodying fixed or at the very least commonly shared notions of masculinity, there is nothing in Scott, Burney, More, Burke, Radcliffe, or Edgeworth remotely like him. On one hand, Knightley is impeccably landed, a magistrate, a gentleman of "untainted" blood and judicious temper, and as such emphatically not the impetuous, combustible masculine type Burke so feared, the mere man of talent who is dangerous precisely because he has nothing to lose. But on the other hand, Knightley avows himself a farmer and a man of business, absorbed in the figures and computations Emma considers so vulgar, a man of energy, vigor, and decision, and as such emphatically not an embodiment of the stasis unto sluggishness Burke commended in country squires. The exemplary love of this "humane" as opposed to "gallant" man is *fraternal* rather than heterosexual. If Emma has difficulty realizing that Knightley is in love with her, it is not because she is impercipient, but rather because he is highly unusual in loving a woman in the same manner he loves his brother rather than the other way around: in the ambient light of sentimental hyperbole, such love seems "indifferent." But while Knightley is in some respects a new man, Austen also harkens back to some older ideals in creating him, looking not to the chivalric pseudotraditionalism celebrated by Burke, but instead bypassing the trauma of 1790s sentimentality altogether to recover a native tradition of gentry liberty, which valued its manly independence from tyrannical rule, where that rule is figured as courtly, feminine, and feminizing (as with the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV, for example)—a tradition which the French Revolution made dangerous by fulfilling.

Emma puts pressure not on deviance from femininity, then, but on deviance from masculinity, and it is engaged in the enterprise of purging masculine gender codes from the ostensible "excesses" of sentimental gallantry and "feminized" display, redefining English manhood instead as brisk, energetic, downright, "natural," unaffected, reserved, businesslike, plain-speak-

ing; gentlemanly, to be sure, but not courtly. What does this reconfiguration mean for Emma? For one, it demotes the moral importance of heterosexual feeling for women. The more conventionally feminine women in the novel—one thinks of Harriet, who is willing to marry any man who asks; of Mrs. Elton, with her fulsome little love-names for her husband; or of Isabella, whose wifely devotion verges on sheer stupidity—give heterosexuality a rather revolting appearance, against which Emma's coolness looks sane and enviable. *Emma*'s patience with Emma's gender transgressions and its impatience with Mr. Elton's and Frank Churchill's are related. *Emma* disdains not only the effeminacy of men, but also the femininity of women. There appears to me as little doubt on Austen's part as there is on Mr. Knightley's that Emma's masculine strength is better than Isabella's "proper," "feminine" weakness, weaknesses that link her to her father. Here, conventional femininity is a degradation to which Emma does not submit. But it is not merely femininity that Emma's portion designedly lacks. It is effeminacy as well, as Emma's rebuke of Frank Churchill's double-dealing and trickery makes clear: "Impropriety! Oh! Mrs. Weston—it is too calm a censure. Much, much beyond impropriety!—It has sunk him, I cannot say how much it has sunk him in my opinion. So unlike what a man should be!—None of that upright integrity, that strict adherence to truth and principle, that disdain of trick and littleness, which a man should display in every transaction of his life!" (E 397).

To the extent that Emma's condemnation here reprises Mr. Knightley's —and even Emma's own—initial gender-based censure of Frank, it indicates that Emma has come back to her basically sound senses at last. But of course, the full import of Emma's censure falls not so much on Frank Churchill at this point as on Emma herself. Every bit as guilty of espionage, trick, littleness, and slack waywardness from truth and principle, Emma is convicting herself not for being unlike what a *woman* should be, but rather for being "unlike what a man should be!" And as is generally the case under the sentimental dispensation, its claims to love and protect notwithstanding, sentimental effeminacy harms other women. An effeminate man herself, the gallant Emma is gratified by Harriet Smith's infantine sweetness and malleability, just as she is even less generously invested in and fascinated by Jane Fairfax's gothicized debility, by the stalwart yet visibly wavering fortitude she tries to sustain in the face of her "female difficulty." Having magnified rather than alleviated the "wrongs of woman," Emma reproaches herself for transgressing the duty of woman to woman; this momentous duty is better honored when women too are like "what a man should be."[15]

When *Emma* was published in 1816, Mary Wollstonecraft had been dead for some twenty years; Ann Radcliffe was still alive but had not published since 1797; and Frances Burney had just published the long-awaited *The Wan-*

derer; or, Female Difficulties (1814), which assumed that the concerns of the 1790s were still pressing, only to fall with a thud. Their careers did not survive the decade that inspired them to such magnificence. In light of this silencing, Austen's achievement in *Emma* impresses me as an act of homage; in the second decade of the nineteenth century, she is still thinking about them, still working through the problems their fiction represented, albeit in a necessarily different social context. Chivalric sentimentality was an incitement to the forces of reaction and reconsolidation, and once its success was assured, sentimentality was refeminized, and the dignity more readily accorded to women's affectivity would go on to authorize their activity in charity work, education, nursing, reform societies, and the like. But *Emma* does not look forward to Victorian visions of feminine puissance, but harkens backwards still to the norms of manly independence which Burke's paean to Marie-Antoinette interrupted.

Introduction

1. J. M. S. Tompkins, *The Popular Novel in England, 1770–1800* (London: Constable & Company, Ltd., 1932; rpt. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), p. v; Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 7; Gary Kelly, *The English Jacobin Novel, 1780–1805* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), p. 1. I am much indebted to these critics.

2. Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), p. 290.

3. See, for example, John B. Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987). Nancy Armstrong's analysis does not stress the inevitably coercive properties of novelistic discourse; indeed she persuasively insists instead on it as a site of women's empowerment. But the "politics" in her study is still removed from the public sphere; see *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). Contextualizing "feeling" within eighteenth-century accounts of psychology and physiology, Jessie Van Sant analyzes representations of suffering—particularly that of women, vagrants, and the criminal poor—in *Eighteenth-Century Sensibility and the Novel: The Senses in Social Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Covering a later period and a different political terrain, Ann Cvetkovich addresses the ideological implications of representing political problems as affective problems, in *Mixed Feelings: Feminism, Mass Culture and Victorian Sensationalism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992). The operative text by Foucault here is *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1979). For other discussions of 1790s novels: Eleanor Ty, *Unsex'd Revolutionaries: Five Women Novelists of the 1790s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), which focuses on the work of progressive women; Mona Scheueramann, *The Novel of Social Protest in England* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1985); and my *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 1–27.

4. For the reception of Burke's *Reflections*, I am vastly indebted to F. P. Lock, *Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), pp. 132–65; to L. G. Mitchell's splendid introduction to *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, vol. VIII, *The French Revolution 1790–1794* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 1–51; to Robert R. Dozier, *For King, Constitution, and Country: The English Loyalists and the French Revolu-*

tion (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1983); and to James K. Chandler, *Wordsworth's Second Nature: A Study of the Poetry and Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

5. Joseph Priestley, *Letters to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke, Occasioned by his Reflections in France* (Birmingham, 1791), Letter iii, p. 31. For Priestley, this is more than a good joke. He complains about Burke's lack of manliness on the preceding page in a more serious vein: "You are proud of what, in my opinion, you ought to be ashamed, the idolatry of a fellow creature, and the abasement of yourself" (p. 30).

6. Letter to Burke, February 19, 1790, in *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke,* vol. VI, ed. Alfred Cobban and Robert A. Smith, pp. 86–87.

7. Letter to Sir Philip Francis of February 20, 1790, in *Correspondence,* vol. VI, p. 91.

8. Letter of February 20, 1790, in *Correspondence,* vol. VI, p. 89.

9. For Burke's irritation with Marie-Antoinette's failures of foresight and policy, particularly with respect to Artois and other émigrés, see Burke's letter to Richard Burke, Jr. (August 16, 1791), *Correspondence,* vol. VI, p. 340, and his letter to Marie-Antoinette, c. August 17, 1791, *Correspondence,* vol. VI, pp. 349–52. It is sometimes argued that Marie-Antoinette's licentiousness was not as well known in England as it was in France, but the exchange between Burke and Francis surely indicates that Burke was aware of her infidelities. On the prominence of her vice in French polemical literature, see Lynn Hunt, "The Many Bodies of Marie-Antoinette: Political Pornography and the Problem of the Feminine in the French Revolution," in *Eroticism and the Body Politic,* ed. Lynn Hunt (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp. 108–30; and Jacques Revel, "Marie Antoinette in Her Fictions: The Staging of Hatred," in *Fictions of the French Revolution,* ed. Bernadette Fort (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991), pp. 111–29.

10. *Sentimental Journey through France and Italy,* ed. J. Gardner Stout, Jr. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), p. 271.

11. For "classic" discussions of sentimentality as a celebration of heterosexual love, see Jean Hagstrum, *Sex and Sensibility* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); *Eros and Vision: The Restoration to Romanticism* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1989); and *The Romantic Body: Love and Sexuality in Keats, Wordsworth and Blake* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985).

12. I am incalculably indebted to Carol Kay's concluding discussion of Burke, surely one of the best essays to appear on Burke in years, in *Political Constructions: Defoe, Richardson, & Sterne in Relation to Hobbes, Hume, & Burke* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 266–78.

13. Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London and New York: Methuen, 1986), p. 130. Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 7–28 *et passim;* and *Romantics,*

Rebels and Reactionaries: English Literature and Its Backgrounds, 1760–1830 (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 103–4.

14. Cited in Todd, *Sensibility,* pp. 130–31. Gillray's print is included in the *Antijacobin Review and Magazine* 1 (1798); and Canning's entire poem is reprinted in *Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin* (London, 1854), pp. 225–44.

15. Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Men in a Letter to the Right Honorable Edmund Burke; Occasioned by his Reflections of the Revolution in France* (London, 1790), pp. 5–6.

16. "The Right Honorable Edmund Burke," in *The Poetical Works of William Lisle Bowles* (Edinburgh: W. P. Nimmo, 1868), vol. I, pp. 67–72.

17. Hannah More, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (Boston: J. Bumstead, 1802), chap. 1, p. 31. In this passage More is thinking about radical dramatists in particular.

18. Richard Polwhele, *The Unsex'd Females* (Boston, 1800), pp. 7, 8. First published in London, 1798. Further citations will be noted parenthetically.

19. For a superlative discussion of the sentiment of modesty as it was thought to conduce to successful heterosexual courtship, see Ruth Yeazell's *Fictions of Modesty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), esp. pp. 3–80.

20. Of the whole Wollstonecraftean band of immodest women, Polwhele writes, "With bliss botanic as their bosoms heave / Still pluck the forbidden fruit, with mother Eve. / For puberty in sighing florets pant, / Or point to the prostitution of a plant; / Dissect its organ of unhallow'd lust / And fondly gaze at the titillating dust" (pp. 10–13).

21. Polwhele's poem was generously reviewed and excerpted in the *Antijacobin Review and Magazine,* May 1799, pp. 27–33.

22. *Antijacobin Review and Magazine* 3 (1799), p. viii.

23. *Antijacobin Review and Magazine* 7 (1800), pp. 494–500 (article 13).

24. J. M. S. Tompkins, *The Popular Novel in England,* p. 301. Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas,* pp. 29–56.

25. Robert Bisset, *Modern Literature: A Novel,* (London, 1804), vol. III. pp. 199–200. Bisset's antiheroine is named "Jemima," after the prostitute in Wollstonecraft's character in *Wrongs of Woman; or, Maria.* In this passage, Bisset is trying to savage Wollstonecraft's proposal, made at several points in *Rights of Woman,* that women take a greater part in public and professional life. It is often assumed that Wollstonecraft's influence on her generation was narrow. But it is impossible to review the popular literature of the time without marveling at the extensiveness of her impact one way or another, however short-lived, and I am not arguing that every author who caricatured her positions actually endorsed that caricature. Warren Roberts's discussion of Wollstonecraft's reputation is still good; see *Jane Austen and the French Revolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), pp. 155–57 and 182–87.

26. For the political contexts of sentimentality, see note 29 below. The medicalizing discourses of sentimentality are discussed in G. S. Rousseau, "Nerves,

Spirits, and Fibres: Towards Defining the Origins of Sensibility," *Blue Guitar* 2 (1976), pp. 125–53; G. S. Rousseau, "Science," in *The Context of English Literature: The Eighteenth Century,* ed. Pat Rogers (London: Methuen, 1978), pp. 153–207; Christopher Lawrence, "The Nervous System in the Scottish Enlightenment," in *Natural Order: Historical Studies of Scientific Culture,* ed. Barry Barnes and Steven Shapin (Beverly Hills and London: Sage Publication, 1979), pp. 19–39.

27. For helpful and concise overview of sentimental tropes, see Todd, *Sensibility,* pp. 1–9. See also Erik Eramatsa, *A Study of the Word "Sentimental" and of Other Linguistic Characteristics of Eighteenth-Century Sentimentalism in England* (Helsinki, 1951).

28. R. S. Crane, "Genealogy of the 'Man of Feeling,'" in *The Idea of the Humanities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 188–213 [originally published in *ELH* 1 (1934)]; Ernest Tuveson, "The Origins of the Moral Sense," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 11 (1947–48), pp. 241–59; Louis Bredvold, *A Natural History of Sensibility* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1962); John K. Sheriff, *The Good Natured Man: The Evolution of a Moral Ideal, 1660–1800* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, c. 1982); Martin Battestin, *The Providence of Wit: Aspects of Form in Augustan Literature and the Arts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974). Countering that "the age of sensibility" is a will-o'-the-wisp and that good Christian divines always believed in original sin, Donald Greene attempts to refute the view of sentimentality that R. S. Crane inaugurated; see "Latitudinarianism and Sensibility: The Genealogy of the 'Man of Feeling' Reconsidered," *Modern Philology* 75 (1977), pp. 159–83. R. F. Brissenden examines the underside of benevolence in *Virtue in Distress: Studies in the Novel of Sentiment from Richardson to Sade* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1974). For more recent essays on this subject, see *Sensibility in Transformation: Creative Resistance to Sentiment from the Augustans to the Romantics: Essays in Honor of Jean H. Hagstrum,* ed. Syndy Conger (Rutherford: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1990).

29. Carol Kay, "Sex, Sympathy, and Authority in Richardson and Hume," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture,* vol. 12, ed. Harry C. Payne (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press), pp. 77–92; and "Canon, Ideology, and Gender: Mary Wollstonecraft's Critique of Adam Smith," *New Political Science* 15 (1986), pp. 63–67; John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); and Robert Markley, "Sentimentality as Performance: Shaftesbury, Sterne, and the Theatrics of Virtue," in *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature,* ed. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (New York: Methuen, 1987), pp. 210–30.

30. My argument here is drawn from Kay, *Political Constructions,* pp. 131–34; and "Sex, Sympathy, and Authority," pp. 77–92.

31. See G. J. Barker-Benfield's compendious *The Culture of Sensibility*

(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), to which I am much indebted. My view of sentimentality as a civilizing process also draws on Norbert Elias, *Power and Civility: The Civilizing Process,* vol. 2, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon, 1982 [1939]), and *The Court Society,* trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon, 1983); John Brewer, "Commercialization and Politics," in Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), pp. 197–262; and J. H. Plumb, "Commercialization and Society," in *The Birth of a Consumer Society,* pp. 265–334.

32. See Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws* (1748); Hume, "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences" (1741); Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1755). This account seems so basic to the self-understanding of the eighteenth century that Hannah More incorporates it without the slightest hesitation into her *Strictures.* Rather more inclined to see "modernity" as a decline into overrefinement than as a flowering of civilization, More's position is oddly enough closer to that of the detested Rousseau than to Burke: "In a state of barbarism, the arts are among the best reformers . . . till, having reached a certain point, those very arts which were the instruments of civilization and refinement, become instruments of corruption and decay. . . . They become agents of voluptuousness" (*Strictures,* p. 48).

33. J. G. A. Pocock, "Burke's Analysis of the French Revolution," in *Virtue, Commerce and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). p. 198.

34. Barker-Benfield, pp. 37–103. See also Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727–83* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); Keith Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: A History of Modern Sensibility* (New York: Pantheon, 1983); Laurence Stone, *The Family, Sex, and Marriage* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977).

35. Carol Kay, *Political Constructions,* p. 232.

36. Although most critics have agreed that sentimentality spells the feminization of culture, scholars have been far quicker to reexamine masculine appropriations of the feminine in the literature of the Romantic and modern periods than they have during the period I address. See, for example, Julie Ellison, *Delicate Subjects—Romanticism, Gender, and the Ethics of Understanding* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990); Alan Richardson, "Romanticism and the Colonization of the Feminine," in *Romanticism and Feminism,* ed. Anne K. Mellor (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), pp. 13–25; and especially Anne K. Mellor, *Romanticism and Gender* (New York: Routledge, 1993). Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar discuss modernism in part as contestation over the feminine in *No Man's Land: The Place of the Woman Writer in the Twentieth Century,* vol. 2: *Sexchanges* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989). Tania Modleski's analysis of the misogynist import of masculine "concessions" to feminism are also germane to the arguments I advance

here; see *Feminism without Women: Culture and Criticism in a "Post-Feminist" Age* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

37. Polwhele is far from despising all women authors. As if to dispel the charge of general misogyny, he concludes his poem by more or less establishing a tribe of More to set off the tribe of Wollstonecraft. On Wollstonecraft's side, we find Robinson, Smith, Williams, Yearsley, Hays, Kauffman, Barbauld; on More's side we have Montague, Carter, Chapone, Seward, Piozzi, Radcliffe, Burney, and Beauclerk.

38. Margaret A. Doody, *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988), p. 147.

39. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 255–57. Colley cites evidence that shows that Englishwomen were far from believing that their countrymen lived their side of the chivalric bargain: an "angry insecurity seems to have been felt by women in Leicester in September 1798. . . . Leicestershire's militia had been urged by the government . . . to volunteer for active service. . . . Only half of the militiamen were willing to go, and the rest returned to their cosy local duties, marching through the county town on the way. They encountered 'the most marked disrespect' especially from the women, who condemned the men of their own county for failing in their masculine as well as their patriotic duty to protect them, for raising once again the spectre of the possibility that the age of chivalry was dead" (pp. 256–57).

40. To D. A. Miller, Austen's "mastery" is ferociously normative and disciplinary; see "The Late Jane Austen," *Raritan* 10 (1990), pp. 55–79.

Chapter One

1. See, for example, Mary Poovey, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); Cora Kaplan, "Wild Nights: Pleasure/Sexuality/Feminism," in *The Ideology of Conduct: Essays in Literature and the History of Sexuality*, ed. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (New York and London: Methuen, 1987), pp. 160–84; Mary Jacobus, "The Difference of View," in *Women Writing and Writing About Women*, ed. Mary Jacobus (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1979), pp. 1–21; and Timothy J. Reiss, "Revolution in Bounds: Wollstonecraft, Women, and Reason," in *Gender and Theory: Dialogues on Feminist Criticism*, ed. Linda Kauffman (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), pp. 11–50. Frances Ferguson shrewdly rebuts Reiss's anti-enlightenment argument by showing the radical import of Wollstonecraft's contribution, in "Wollstonecraft Our Contemporary," in *Gender and Theory*, pp. 51–62. Orrin Wang also challenges the tendency to see Wollstonecraft as wholly accepting the male/reason and

female/imagination binary in "The Other Reasons: Female Alterity and Enlightenment Discourse in Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*," *Yale Journal of Criticism* 5 (1991), pp. 129–49.

2. See Regina M. Janes, "On the Reception of Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 39 (1978), pp. 293–302. For a discussion of *Rights of Woman* and female education, see Mitzi Meyers, "Reform or Ruin: 'A Revolution in Female Manners,'" *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 6 (1982), pp. 113–32.

3. G. J. Barker-Benfield, "Mary Wollstonecraft: Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthwoman," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 50 (1989), pp. 95–115. As Barker-Benfield as well as Flexner and Tomalin (see chap. 1, note 6) point out, Wollstonecraft was connected to the Commonwealth tradition through the community of rational dissenters at Newington Green, where she moved in 1783. There she met Richard Price, and most probably became acquainted with James Burgh's *Political Disquisitions: An Enquiry with Public Errors, Defects, and Abuses* (1774) through his widow, who regarded Wollstonecraft as a daughter. Although I am much indebted to Barker-Benfield's discussion, I think there are important differences between Wollstonecraft and republican allies such as Price or Burgh, and I call attention to the tension between the Commonwealth tradition and the feminist uses to which Wollstonecraft would put it. For other discussions of Commonwealth republicanism, I am indebted to Caroline Robbins, *The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman: Studies in the Transmission, Development and Circumstance of English Liberal Thought from the Restoration of Charles II until the War with the Thirteen Colonies* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961); J. G. A. Pocock, "The Varieties of Whiggism from Exclusion to Reform: A History of Ideology and Discourse," in *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays in Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth-Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 215–310. Most feminist-based discussions of Commonwealth ideology are grounded in American Studies. See Ruth Bloch, "The Gendered Meanings of Virtue in Revolutionary American Studies," *Signs* 13 (1987), pp. 98–121; and Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "Domesticating Virtue," in *Literature and the Body*, ed. Elaine Scarry (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988). For an excellent discussion of Godwin and radical homophobia of the 1790s, see Robert J. Corber "Representing the 'Unspeakable': William Godwin and the Politics of Homophobia," in *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1 (1790), pp. 85–101.

4. Burgh, *Political Disquisitions* (London, 1774), vol. III, chap. 1 ("Of Manners"), p. 11; Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man*, ed. Henry Collins (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), pp. 102, 249. Also see Burgh, "Of Lewdness" (pp. 133–50); and "Luxury Hurtful to Manners, and Dangerous to the State" (pp. 59–98).

5. See Elissa S. Guralnick, "Radical Politics in Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*," *Studies in Burke and His Time* 18 (1977), pp.

155–66. For a discussion of the indifference of male republican ideologues to women's political agency in the American republic, see Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980 [rpt. Norton, 1986]), pp. 27–32. My understanding of British radicalism during this period owes much to E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class,* 2d rev. ed. (Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1968); J. Ann Hone, *For the Cause of Truth: Radicalism in London, 1796–1821* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); H. T. Dickinson, *Britain Radicalism and the French Revolution* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985); Albert Goodwin, *The Friends of Liberty: The English Democratic Movement in the Age of the French Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979); and Jon Mee, *Dangerous Enthusiasm: William Blake and the Culture of Radicalism in the 1790s* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

6. Claire Tomalin, *The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft* (New York: Signet Classics, 1974), p. 93; Eleanor Flexner, *Mary Wollstonecraft* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973), pp. 122–28; Janet Todd, *Mary Wollstonecraft: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1976), p. 2. In recent years, this tendency has been slowly reversed. Mary Poovey discusses Wollstonecraft's first *Vindication* at length in *Proper Lady,* pp.56–68; as does Gary Kelly in his excellent *Revolutionary Feminism: The Mind and Career of Mary Wollstonecraft* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), chap. 5.

7. See Mitzi Meyers, "Politics from the Outside: Mary Wollstonecraft's First *Vindication,*" *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 6 (1977), p. 119. For an excellent analysis of Wollstonecraft's control of style in the first *Vindication,* also see Gary Kelly's chapter devoted to it in *Revolutionary Feminism: The Mind and Career of Mary Wollstonecraft* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), pp. 84–139. Syndy Conger discusses Wollstonecraft's style in "The Sentimental Logic of Wollstonecraft's Prose," *Prose Studies* 10 (1987), pp. 143–58.

8. For a discussion of Wollstonecraft's strategies which draws on contemporary feminist theory, see Patricia Yaeger, *Honey-Mad Women: Emancipatory Strategies in Women's Writing* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), pp. 149–76.

9. *MEM,* p. 230.

10. See, for example, W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 116–59; and Ronald Paulson, *Representations of Revolution (1798–1820)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983).

11. At the end of the pamphlet, Wollstonecraft recasts the opposition between the sublime and the beautiful by equating the former with the sober judgment of age and the latter with the flighty wit of youth, and accuses Burke of a certain perversity in not sustaining the character appropriate to his own advanced age. Of course, the wit/judgment opposition is hardly free from gendered implications, and in chastising Burke's heterogeneousness in being a witty

old man, she is reproducing what she considers to be his own criticism of strong and rational women. Paulson, Barker-Benfield, Poovey, and others also note Wollstonecraft's concern with Burke's *Enquiry* in the *Rights of Man.*

12. Critics have not yet addressed the issue of Wollstonecraft's orientalism, the strategic purpose of which is to discredit opponents as diverse as Burke and Fordyce by showing that their piety is Moslem rather than Christian.

13. This argument is cogently set forth in Virginia Sapiro, *A Vindication of Political Virtue: The Political Theory of Mary Wollstonecraft* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 186–222. Unlike most recent commentators on Wollstonecraft, who tend to complain that Wollstonecraft is bourgeois or liberal, Sapiro contextualizes Wollstonecraft more sympathetically within eighteenth-century political philosophy.

14. Gary Kelly argues along similar lines in "Mary Wollstonecraft as *Vir Bonus*," *English Studies in Canada* 5 (1979), pp. 275–91, much of which is absorbed into *Revolutionary Feminism,* chap. 5.

15. Wollstonecraft clearly did feel compelled by Rousseau's fantasy of life before and without gender in *The Second Discourse.* For a discussion of Rousseau's notoriously inconsistent thoughts on gender difference and social contract theory, see Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 196–204; and Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

16. *Lives of the English Poets,* ed. G. Birkbeck Hill (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1905), vol. 1, p. 157. Johnson is mentioned with great respect throughout the *Rights of Woman.*

17. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful,* ed. J. T. Boulton (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968, c. 1958), pp. 110, 113.

18. For an illuminating discussion of this aspect of reactionary British culture, see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 250–62.

19. Wollstonecraft, *An Historical and Moral View of the Origin and Progress of the French Revolution* (London, 1790), p. 427.

20. Carol Kay's discussions of Wollstonecraft's uses of Smith have been foundational for me. See "Canon, Ideology, and Gender: Mary Wollstonecraft's Critique of Adam Smith," *New Political Science* 15 (1986), pp. 63–76; and "On the Verge of Politics: Border Tactics for Eighteenth-Century Studies," *boundary* 2 12 (1984), pp. 197–215.

21. Paulson, *Representations of Revolution,* pp. 72–73. Although I am much indebted to Paulson's study, I have trouble reconciling the claim that the revolution is female to the claim that the revolution is an oedipal challenge to the power of the king, a view underlying much of his discussion. Also see Neil Hertz, "Medusa's Head: Male Hysteria under Political Pressure," *Representations* 4

(1983), pp. 27–54, which has influenced me a good deal.

22. Natalie Z. Davis has explained that it was commonly the practice from the seventeenth century onward in France as well as England for men engaging in political protest to dress in women's clothing, both as a means of concealment and as a carnivalesque assumption of the energy and irresponsibility of unruly women. See *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), pp. 147–50. Addressing the sexual identity of the marchers more directly than Burke, Wollstonecraft observes that men dressed as women were among the crowd.

23. For a contrasting argument, insisting on the femaleness of the crowd, see Linda M. G. Zerilli, "Text/Woman as Spectacle: Edmund Burke's 'French Revolution,'" *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 33 (1992), pp. 47–52, which opposes the Queen's comforting beauty to the unnerving sublimity of revolutionary women.

24. Wollstonecraft, *Historical and Moral View,* p. 426. In other respects, however, Wollstonecraft's account is clearly indebted to Burke. Wollstonecraft too indulges in gothic depictions of savagery in the political spheres, only the villains in her version, not surprisingly, are the palace guards committed to suppressing the revolution: They "promised, as they drained the cup in her [the Queen's] honour, not to sheath their swords, till France was compelled to obedience, and the national assembly dispersed. With savage ferocity they danced to the sound of music attuned to slaughter, whilst plans of death and devastation gave zest to the orgies, that worked up their animal spirits to the highest pitch" (pp. 160–61). Still, it is worth noting that Wollstonecraft's representation of the culpable excess of female insurgents in part appears to legitimate the brutal crackdown on women's political clubs after the execution of Marie-Antoinette. See Lynn Hunt, "The Bad Mother," in *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 89–123; Dominique Godineau, *Les femmes tricoteuses* (Paris: Alinea, 1989), pp. 268–70; and Dorinda Outram, *The Body and the French Revolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989).

25. *MEM,* p. 232.

26. Barker-Benfield, *Sensibility,* pp. 290–93.

27. For discussions of Rousseau and women's saturation in their sex, see Denise Riley, *Am I That Name: Feminism and the Category of 'Women' in History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), pp. 35–43; Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere,* pp. 66–89.

28. Wollstonecraft, *Historical and Moral View,* p. 309. Burgh proposed taxing celibacy in *Crito* (London 1766), vol. I, p. 56; in his utopia, he made marriage a condition for citizenship; see *Account of the Cessares,* pp. 50, 110n.

29. For a splendid essay tracing the impact on Burke of Sarah Siddon's enactment of heroically distressed women—paying particular attention to Kemble's Shakespearean adaptation, *Coriolanus; or, The Roman Matron* (London,

1789)—see Christopher Reid, "Burke's Tragic Muse," in *Burke and the French Revolution: Bicentennial Essays,* ed. Steven Blakemore (Athens, Ga., and London: University of Georgia Press, 1992), pp. 1–2. Reid accounts for what we see as the peculiar empowerment of Marie-Antoinette in the *Reflections* both by seeing her as a tragic heroine in the manner of Siddons and by arguing that the "feminization" of aesthetic response allowed for a hybrid of grandeur as well as beauty. See also Julie Carlson, "Women and Romantic Antitheatricalism," *ELH,* 60 (1993), pp. 149–80, which also argues for Marie-Antoinette's strength. My angle on the *public* (rather than private/domestic) function of sentimentality for Burke, if not for the Romantics, inclines me to decidedly different emphases. It is worth remembering that Burke (unlike Wollstonecraft) stresses not Marie-Antoinette's status as a mother, but rather her status as a publicly beautiful woman who inspires gallantry that has nothing to do with possession and domesticity. For another discussion of Burke's famed tendency to partake of the heterogeneity he deplores, see Frans De Bruyn, "Theater and Countertheater in Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France,*" in Blakemore, pp. 28–68.

Chapter Two

1. Wollstonecraft's first publication was *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1787), but despite its obvious interest, it is a rather modest and conventional work which clearly neither achieves nor attempts the boldness to which Wollstonecraft aspired in *Mary, A Fiction.*

2. *Collected Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft,* ed. Ralph M. Wardle (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 255; May 20, 1794, to Ruth Barlow.

3. See, for example, Lucinda Cole, "(Anti)Feminist Sympathies: The Politics of Relationship in Smith, Wollstonecraft, and More," *ELH,* 58 (1991), pp. 107–40; Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 129–38; and Barker-Benfield, *Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 279–86. As I argue in chapter 1, I think the centrality of maternity in Wollstonecraft's political thought has been exaggerated.

4. In arguing this, Wollstonecraft was fighting a losing battle with her own allies. See, for example, Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984); Dorinda Outram, *The Body and the French Revolution: Sex, Class, and Political Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989); Peter Brooks, "The Revolutionary Body," in *Fictions of the French Revolution,* ed. Bernadette Fort (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991), pp. 35–53; and Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere,* pp. 66–89.

5. Wollstonecraft, *Collected Letters,* p. 162 (September 13, 1787, to Henry

Gabell).

6. Godwin goes on, "The story is nothing. He that looks into the book only for incident, will probably lay it down with disgust. But the feelings are of the truest and most exquisite class; every circumstance is adorned with that species of imagination, which enlists itself under the banners of delicacy and sentiment. A work of sentiment, as it is called, is too often another name for a work of affectation. He that should imagine that the sentiments are affected, would indeed be entitled to our profoundest commiseration" (MEM 223–24). Godwin here recalls Johnson's remarks on *Clarissa*.

7. Wollstonecraft, *Collected Letters*, p. 385 (March 22, 1797, to Everina Wollstonecraft).

8. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "A Poem Is Being Written," *Representations* 17 (1987), p. 130.

9. Mary Poovey, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 98. Poovey is specifically discussing *The Wrongs of Woman; or, Maria* here, but her argument could apply just as aptly to *Mary, A Fiction*.

10. Ralph Wardle, *Mary Wollstonecraft: A Critical Biography* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966 [rpt. University of Kansas Press, 1951]), pp. 73–74; Eleanor Flexner, *Mary Wollstonecraft* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 80; Janet Todd, *Women's Friendship in Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 192–208. Laurie Langbauer reclaims *maternal* romance in her essay on *Wrongs of Woman; or, Maria*, but she does not really touch upon the homoerotic romance in *Mary*. See *Women and Romance: The Consolations of Gender in the English Novel* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 95–107. For Shawn Lisa Maurer, "Mary's immoderate cultivation of maternal sensibility . . . precludes her ability to experience heterosexual desire": see "The Female (As) Reader: Sex, Sensibility, and the Maternal in Wollstonecraft's Fictions," *Essays in Literature* 19 (1992), pp. 36–54.

11. *Emma*, p. 387. Margaret Higgonet discusses the concern about the increase in female suicides in the late eighteenth century in "Speaking Silences: Women's Suicides," in *The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary Perspectives* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 68–83. For discussions of the convention of women dying for love in eighteenth-century fiction, see Susan Staves, "British Seduced Maidens," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 14 (1980–81), pp. 109–34; and my "'A Sweet Face as White as Death': Jane Austen and the Politics of Female Sensibility," *Novel* 22 (1989), pp. 159–74. For an excellent study of how Charlotte Stieglitz executed her suicide to help her husband overcome his writer's block, see Lynne Tatlock, "Grim Wives' Tales: Mundt's Stieglitz, Stieglitz's Goethe," *Monatshefte* 82 (1990), pp. 467–86.

12. My sense of the deconstructive potential of butch/femme owes much to Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), esp. pp. 122–24.

13. See, for example, the following studies, where the novel is read as a cautionary tale against the dangers of female sensibility: Mary Poovey, *Proper Lady*, pp. 94–95; Gary Kelly, *English Fiction of the Romantic Period, 1789–1830* (New York and London: Longman, 1989), pp. 40–41; Janet Todd, "Reason and Sensibility in Mary Wollstonecraft's *The Wrongs of Woman*," *Frontiers* 3 (1981), pp. 17–20. Anna Wilson's recent article is an exception to this rule, and we reach similar conclusions by different routes; see "Mary Wollstonecraft and the Search for the Radical Woman," *Genders* 6 (1989), pp. 88–101.

14. The otherwise persuasive Gary Kelly seems to overlook the suprapersonal political import of sexual relations in *Wrongs of Woman* when he suggests that Wordsworth and Coleridge (unlike Wollstonecraft) "transcended the conflict of revolution and reaction"; see his Introduction to *Mary and The Wrongs of Woman*, pp. xix–xx. Tomalin opines that Wordsworth's silence about Wollstonecraft may have been due to his uneasiness about his own desertion of Vallon and his daughter, in *The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft* (New York: Signet Classics, 1974), p. 198.

15. Sterne, *Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, ed. J. Gardner Stout, Jr. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 197–98.

16. Gary Kelly, *English Fiction of the Romantic Period*, p. 40.

17. Arguing that Wollstonecraft is critiquing rather than availing herself of gothic conventions, Marilyn Butler takes a very different position in "The Woman at the Window: Ann Radcliffe in the Novels of Mary Wollstonecraft and Jane Austen," *Women in Literature* 1 (1980).

18. Wollstonecraft's representation of the abuses to which husbands were legally entitled draws on material from *Trials for Adultery* (1779–80). Although Laurence Stone's recent findings surely confirm that Wollstonecraft was living amid a conservative backlash, particularly as far as divorce and separation were concerned, they also show that the law made it increasingly difficult for husbands to incarcerate recalcitrant wives in private madhouses, as Venables does here. See *Road to Divorce: England 1530–1987* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp. 164–69.

19. Wollstonecraft here—as in her uses of Sterne—seems to be reworking the disillusion and suicidal reflection she had expressed in *Letters Written during a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* (1796).

20. *Antijacobin Review and Magazine* (1798), p. 92. There is some painful evidence that Wollstonecraft's own friends likewise refused to see the political point of Maria's delusions. In her letter to George Dyson, May 15, 1797, Wollstonecraft acknowledges the rawness of her sketch, but expresses dismay at Dyson's opinion that Maria's domestic unhappiness is not moving, and Wollstonecraft attributes this insensitivity to the fact that he is a male: "I have been reading your remarks and I find them a little discouraging. . . . I was perfectly aware that some of the incidents ought to be transposed [sic] and heightened by

more harmonious shading; and I wished to avail myself of yours and Mr G's criticism before I began to adjust my events into a story . . . yet I am vexed and surprised at your not thinking the situation of Maria sufficiently important, and can only account for this want of—shall I say it? delicacy of feeling by recollecting that you are a man." See Wollstonecraft, *Collected Letters,* pp. 391–92. It is very unfortunate that Godwin, who used much of the rest of this letter as a Preface to his edition of *The Wrongs of Woman; or, Maria,* published after Wollstonecraft's death, omitted the contextualizing section quoted here. Wollstonecraft goes out of her way to defend Maria's "sensibility" not because she is committed to fine feeling, but because even a well-disposed male reader failed "to be disgusted with him [Venables]!!!" and thus to understand why Maria gets upset. Such insensitivity demolishes the premise of the entire novel, i.e., that women are "wronged."

21. Sterne, *Sentimental Journey,* pp. 128–29.

22. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions,* ed. P. N. Furbank (New York: Everyman's Library, 1992), p. 59.

23. *Confessions,* p. 158.

24. Todd, *Women's Friendship in Literature,* pp. 211–12. Although I dissent from Todd's assessment of the Jemima/Maria relationship, her essay strikes me as still one of the most comprehensive ever written on *Wrongs.*

25. Jemima's story also corrects Wollstonecraft's own highly sentimentalized representation of "ruined" women in *Rights of Woman,* where she imagines them worthy of respect only insofar as they carry a torch for their first seducer. See VRW 164–65.

26. Cora Kaplan, "Pandora's Box: Subjectivity, Class and Sexuality in Socialist Feminist Criticism," in *Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism,* ed. Gayle Greene and Coppelia Kahn (London and New York: Methuen, 1985), pp. 146–76. I am most indebted to this essay, as to Kaplan's other discussion of Wollstonecraft in "Wild Nights: Pleasure/Sexuality/Feminism," in *The Ideology of Conduct: Essays in Literature and the History of Sexuality,* ed. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (London: Methuen, 1987), pp. 160–84. For a discussion of masculine appropriations of maternity of the sort I see Wollstonecraft trying to resist in *Wrongs,* see Ruth Perry's fine "Colonizing the Breast: Sexuality and Maternity in Eighteenth-Century England," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 2 (1991), pp. 204–34.

27. For a discussion of this, see Ronald Paulson, *Representations of Revolution (1798–1820)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), pp. 73–74.

28. Kelly, *English Fiction of the Romantic Period,* p. 42.

29. Wollstonecraft, *Collected Letters,* p. 253; dated April 27, 1794, to Ruth Barlow.

30. Wollstonecraft evidently wrote part of a dramatic comedy about these incidents, but Godwin destroyed it. Claiming that this "sketch of a comedy" was in "so crude and imperfect a state," Godwin writes that he "judged it most respectful to her memory to commit it to the flames." But if this "sketch" was

presented to "both the winter-managers," Wollstonecraft must have considered it at least partly intelligible, and it is hard to understand exactly why Godwin—who writes so freely about Wollstonecraft's heterodox religious views, her scandalous personal life, her brushes with suicide—should feel so delicate about her memory when it comes to literary fragments. Having presented us with a sentimental heroine ready to die for love, Godwin probably could not imagine Wollstonecraft capable of turning the events narrated in *The Wrongs of Woman; or, Maria* into a laughing matter. See *MEM*, p. 255.

Chapter Three

1. For a history of *Macbeth*'s fortunes during the age of sensibility, see Marvin Rosenberg, "Macbeth and Lady Macbeth in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *Focus on Macbeth*, ed. John Russell Brown (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), pp. 73–74, which is condensed from his *The Masks of Macbeth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978). See also Julie Carlson's excellent discussion of Mrs. Siddons as Lady Macbeth in "Women and Romantic Antitheatricalism," *ELH* 60 (1993), pp. 149–80, which argues that Lady Macbeth's characterization grows monumentally horrific in inverse proportion to the weakening of Macbeth's own, as a man of feeling. I am persuaded by Carlson's argument, and I believe it helps to highlight how Radcliffe's fantasy of a nonmisogynist sentimentality in *Romance of the Forest* seems so distinctive.

2. David Durant presents Radcliffe as a staunch defender of established values of rationality against ostensibly subversive Romantic ideas, in "Ann Radcliffe and the Conservative Gothic," *Studies in English Literature* 22 (1982), pp. 519–30; Mary Poovey analyzes the ideology of self-control in "Ideology and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*," *Criticism* 21 (1979), pp. 307–30; Daniel Cottom discusses the politics of Radcliffe's aesthetics in *The Civilized Imagination: A Study of Ann Radcliffe, Jane Austen, and Sir Walter Scott* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). The sense of Radcliffe as blissfully removed from active concern in political controversy emerges from Thomas N. Talfourd's "Memoir" of Radcliffe, prefaced to *Gaston de Blondeville* (1826).

3. The classic essay on Radcliffe's "derivativeness" is Alan D. McKillop, "Mrs. Radcliffe on the Supernatural in Poetry," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 31 (1932), pp. 352–59.

4. For a particularly successful psychoanalytic discussion of Radcliffe, confronting dead and displaced mothers in her work, see Claire Kahane, "Gothic Mirror and Feminine Identity," *Centennial Review* 24 (1980), pp. 43–64; see also Norman N. Holland and Leona F. Sherman, "Gothic Possibilities," in *Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts*, ed. Elizabeth A. Flynn and Patrocinio P. Schweickart (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 215–33. Although Michelle A. Massé has little to say about Radcliffe,

her arguments about masochism and repetition are well suited to Radcliffe; see *In the Name of Love: Women, Masochism, and the Gothic* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992).

5. Exceptions to this include Margaret A. Doody's "Deserts, Ruins, and Troubled Waters: Female Dreams in Fiction and the Development of the Gothic Novel," *Genre* 10 (1977), pp. 529–72, which packs an enormously informative overview of Radcliffe's entire canon into an article-length analysis of the gothic as a whole; Patricia Meyers Spacks's compelling overview in *Desire and Truth: Functions of Plot in Eighteenth-Century English Novels* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 147–74; and Kate Ferguson Ellis's excellent *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), pp. 99–128.

6. Ronald Paulson, *Representations of Revolution (1798–1820)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p. 221. Gary Kelly also reads gothic fiction as novels of manners in *English Fiction of the Romantic Period, 1789-1830* (New York and London: Longman, 1989), pp. 49–50. Among other critics who likewise insist on the political content of gothic, however that politics gets defined, I would also place David Punter, *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day* (London and New York: Longman, 1980), pp. 70–97; and James Thompson's "Surveillance in William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*," in *Gothic Fictions: Prohibition/Transgression*, ed. Kenneth W. Graham (New York: AMS Press, 1989), pp. 173–98.

7. Chard, Introduction and Notes to *The Romance of the Forest* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 390, note to p. 269. I am very grateful for Chard's fine edition.

8. The case for the blandly progressive character of *The Romance of the Forest* is strengthened by the possibility that Radcliffe drew her names from the infamous diamond necklace affair, which featured Comte and Comtesse de La Motte, and which considerably damaged the reputation of Marie-Antoinette. However, as Chloe Chard points out (RF 367), Radcliffe could have drawn this name from other sources as well. See Sarah Maza, "The Diamond Necklace Affair Revisited (1785–1786): The Case of the Missing Queen," in *Eroticism and the Body Politic*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp. 63–89.

9. On the loaded representation of the English crowd, mobs, and riots, see E. P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* 50 (1971), pp. 76–136. Treating many stage adaptations of Radcliffe's novels, Paula R. Backsheider persuasively argues that the crowd takes on increasing importance in gothic drama as a result of such crises as the Gordon riots and the revolutionary unrest of the early 1790s; see *Spectacular Politics: Theatrical Power and Mass Culture in Early Modern England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 189–223.

10. For assessments of the connection between reason and emotion, which

grow out of approaches to sentimentality very different from my own, see, for example, Gary Kelly, "A Constant Vicissitude of Interesting Passions: Ann Radcliffe's Perplexed Narratives," *Ariel* 10 (1979), pp. 45–64; and Elizabeth Napier, *The Failure of Gothic: Problems of Disjunction in an Eighteenth-Century Literary Form* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

11. In *Justine,* for example, one would-be ravisher coolly explains to the girl before him how the satisfactions of corporeal pleasure exceed the sentimental pleasure of being esteemed for charitable conduct: "With a child like you, it is infinitely preferable to extract, by way of dividends upon one's investment, all the pleasures lechery is able to offer—much better these delights than the very insipid and futile ones said to come of the disinterested giving of help. . . . But enough of politics whereof, my child, you are not likely to understand anything"; *Justine, Philosophy of the Bedroom and Other Writings,* trans. Richards Seaver and Austryn Wainhouse (New York: Grove, 1965), pp. 470–71.

12. Despite its obvious drawbacks, Malcolm Ware's study of Radcliffe's debt to Burke has yet to be displaced. See *Sublimity in the Novels of Ann Radcliffe,* Essays and Studies on English Language and Literature, 25 (Upsala, Sweden: Lundequistka, 1963).

13. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful,* ed. J. T. Boulton (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968, c. 1958), p. 113.

Chapter Four

1. The phrase appears in *In the Name of Love: Women, Masochism, and the Gothic* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992). Todorov uses Radcliffe's closural explanations as the basis for his distinction between the uncanny and the marvelous in *The Fantastic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), pp. 41–42, a distinction which builds on and elaborates the long-standing consensus about Radcliffe's fundamental commitment to rational and plausible narrative, over irrational and supernatural tales. Many readers continue to consider this formal characteristic of (some of) Radcliffe's fiction foundational. For example, to George Haggerty, Radcliffe's "insistence on 'explanation' . . . is a measure of her refusal to take the formal implications of her material seriously," in *Gothic Fiction/Gothic Form* (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), p. 22, an argument similar to the one mounted by Elizabeth Napier throughout *The Failure of Gothic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); for D. L. Macdonald, Radcliffe's conclusion is calculated precisely to be bathetic—see "Bathos and Repetition: The Uncanny in Radcliffe," *The Journal of Narrative Technique* 19 (1989), pp. 197–204. Because I see the corpse switch as consistent with (though more insistently obtrusive than) foregoing material, Todorov's distinction is not so useful to me, and on the whole I

find that the importance of Radcliffe's commitment to rational explanation has been rather exaggerated. Terry Castle is one of the few scholars to treat Radcliffe's handling of the intangible as more than a clumsy joke. I am much indebted to her "The Spectralization of the Other in *The Mysteries of Udolpho,*" in *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature,* ed. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (New York and London: Methuen, 1987), pp. 210–30.

2. By contrast, Claire Kahane argues that the corpse switch makes it possible to enjoy and then to repress "the sexual and aggressive center of Udolpho." See "Gothic Mirrors and Feminine Identity," *The (M)other Tongue: Essays in Feminist Psychoanalytic Interpretations,* ed. Shirley Nelson Garner, Claire Kahane, and Madelon Sprengnether (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 339–40. My position is closer to that of Coral Ann Howells, who argues that the conclusion forces into our view the false limits of sentimental narrative. See "The Pleasure of the Woman's Text: Ann Radcliffe's Subtle Transgressions," in *Gothic Fictions: Prohibition/Transgression,* ed. Kenneth W. Graham (New York: AMS Press, 1989), pp. 151–62.

3. See Pocock's edition of and introduction to Burke's *Reflections* (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987), pp. vii–lvi.

4. *The Castle of Otranto,* ed. E. F. Bleiler (New York: Dover Publications, 1966), p. 59.

5. For discussions which locate Radcliffe's novel securely within conservative ideology, see Mary Poovey, "Ideology and *The Mysteries of Udolpho,*" *Criticism* 21 (1979), pp. 307–30; David Durant, "Ann Radcliffe and Conservative Gothic," *Studies in English Literature* 22 (1982), pp. 519–31. I agree with Barbara Benedict, who argues that while direct modes of narration privilege conservative values of the sort Poovey and Durant outline, other aspects of Radcliffe's style subvert them; see "Pictures of Conformity: Sentiment and Structure in Ann Radcliffe's Style," *Philological Quarterly* 18 (1989), pp. 363–77. It is worth observing that most discussions of Radcliffe's politics posit *Udolpho* as Radcliffe's norm, and pass over *The Sicilian Romance* and *The Romance of the Forest,* both of which comfortably employ progressive themes and figures.

6. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 250–57 et passim.

7. See the discussion of Shakespearean acting in "On the Supernatural in Poetry. By the Late Mrs. Radcliffe," *New Monthly Magazine* xvi (1826), pp. 145–52. This essay is a canceled chapter from Radcliffe's posthumously published *Gaston de Blondville* (1826). I am most grateful to F. W. Price's informative "Ann Radcliffe, Mrs. Siddons, and the Character of Hamlet," *Notes and Queries* (New Series) 23 (1976), pp. 164–67. For a survey of literary appropriations of Shakespearean allusion in eighteenth-century fiction, see Robert Gale Noyes, *The Thespian Mirror: Shakespeare in the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1953).

8. Gary Kelly, *English Fiction of the Romantic Period, 1789–1830* (London and New York: Longman, 1989), p. 53.

9. Mitzi Meyers discusses the common ground of radical and reactionary reformers of female manners in "Reform or Ruin, 'A Revolution in Female Manners,'" *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 11 (1982), pp. 199–216; and "Hannah More's Tracts for the Times: Social Fiction and Female Ideology," in *Fetter'd or Free: British Women Novelists, 1670–1815,* ed. Mary Anne Schofield and Cecilia Macheski (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1986), pp. 264–84.

10. Among critics who maintain that Radcliffe's design is essentially didactic, aiming to show the perils of ungoverned sensibility and unrestrained imagination and to extol the virtues of sense, see Poovey, "Ideology and *The Mysteries of Udolpho,*" pp. 321–23; Bette B. Roberts, "The Horrid Novels: *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and *Northanger Abbey,*"in *Gothic Fictions,* pp. 89–111; and Nelson Smith, "Sense, Sensibility, and Ann Radcliffe," *Studies in English Literature* 13 (1973), pp. 577–90.

11. Robert Kiely, for example, observes that Udolpho is a "male world" in *The Romantic Novel in England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), p. 75. I surely agree, but would only add that La Vallée is a male world too.

12. Kenneth W. Graham argues that Emily's sexual attraction to Montoni undermines notions about propriety and domesticity, and hence contributes to the revolutionary implications of gothic narrative. See "Emily's Demon-Lover: The Gothic Revolution of *The Mysteries of Udolpho,*" in *Gothic Fictions,* pp. 163–71.

13. Susan Fraiman discusses the problems that female development poses for the *Bildungsroman* in *Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and the Novel of Development* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

14. This position is taken by several scholars to whom I am otherwise very indebted. These include: Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Desire and Truth: Functions of Plot in Eighteenth-Century English Novels* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 147–74; Katherine Ferguson Ellis, *The Contested Castle: Gothic Novels and the Subversion of Domestic Ideology* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), pp. 121–24; and William Patrick Day, *In the Circle of Fear and Desire: A Study of Gothic Fantasy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp. 106–8.

Chapter Five

1. While I discuss Radcliffe's use of landscape in terms of her development of *style indirect libre,* many other scholars have related her representation of landscape to that of contemporary painters. See, for example, Lynne Epstein, "Mrs. Radcliffe's Landscapes: The Influence of Three Landscape Painters on Her

Nature Descriptions," *Hartford Studies in Literature* 1 (1969), pp. 107–20; Raymond D. Havens, "Ann Radcliffe's Nature Descriptions," *Modern Language Notes* 66 (1951), pp. 251–55; Malcome Ware, "Mrs. Radcliffe's 'Picturesque Embellishment,'" *Tennessee Studies in Literature* 5 (1960), pp. 67–71; Charles Kostelnick, "From Picturesque View to Picturesque Vision: William Gilpin and Anne Radcliffe," *Mosaic* 18 (1985), pp. 31–48; Jean Hagstrum, "Pictures to the Heart: The Psychological Picturesque in Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*," in *Greene Centennial Studies: Essays Presented to Donald Green in the Centennial Year of the University of Southern California*, ed. Paul Korshin and Robert R. Allen (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1984), pp. 434–41; William C. Synder, "Mother Nature's Other Natures: Landscape in Women's Writings, 1770–1830," *Women's Studies* 21 (1992), pp. 143–62; Charles C. Murrah, "Mrs. Radcliffe's Landscapes: The Eye and the Fancy," *University of Windsor Review* 18 (1984), pp. 7–23.

2. Karl Kroeber's discussion of Radcliffe's use of landscape to bring about a state of *transport* is still very germane. See *Styles in Fictional Structure: The Art of Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, and George Eliot* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971). For a somewhat similar argument, see Maximillian E. Novak, "The Extended Moment: Time, Dream, History, and Perspective in Eighteenth-Century English Fiction," in *Probability, Time, and Space in Eighteenth-Century Literature*, ed. Paula Backsheider (New York: AMS Press, 1979).

3. See Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16 (1975), p. 14; Teresa de Lauretis uncovers the sadism of narrativity itself in *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), pp. 103–7. Michelle Massé uses Mulvey's statement as the starting point for her consideration of gothic narrative in particular in *In the Name of Love: Women, Masochism, and the Gothic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), esp. pp. 73–106.

4. Daniel Cottom, *The Civilized Imagination: A Study of Ann Radcliffe, Jane Austen, and Sir Walter Scott* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 65.

5. Cited in Cottom, *The Civilized Imagination*, p. 65.

6. *NA*, p. 160.

7. Radcliffe, *A Journey Made in the Summer of 1794 through Holland and the Western Frontiers of Germany* (London, 1795), pp. 428, 427.

8. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. J. T. Boulton (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1958), part 1, section VII ("Of the SUBLIME"), pp. 38–39. It is possible that the discussion the Damiens case received in a number of British periodicals after the publication of the first edition of the *Enquiry* (in April 1757) inspired Burke to include a reference to the sublimity of torture in the second edition (in January 1759).

9. *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, 6 vols., ed. G. B. Hill (Oxford: Clarendon

Press, 1979–), vol. II, p. 393; vol. I, pp. 466–67.

10. "Advertisement to the Second Edition [1793]," in *Life*, vol. I, pp. 11–12.

11. For an accessible selection of reports from the *Times* during this period, see *The French Revolution: Extracts from The Times, 1789–1794*, ed. Neal Ascherson (London: Times Books, 1975), p. 74.

12. *The Monk*, ed. Howard Anderson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 356.

13. *A Sicilian Romance*, ed. Alison Milbank (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 61 .

14. See for example Susan Greenfield's excellent "Veiled Desires: Mother-Daughter Love and Sexual Imagery in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*," *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 33 (1992), pp. 73–89; see also Elizabeth P. Broadwell, "The Veil Image in Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*," *South Atlantic Bulletin* 40 (1975), pp. 76–87; and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions* (New York: Methuen, 1986), pp. 140–75.

15. For a discussion of Burke's political rhetoric, see James T. Boulton, *Language of Politics in the Age of Wilkes and Burke* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963).

16. For a very thorough discussion of Radcliffe's novel as a response to Lewis, one of the givens of Radcliffean scholarship, see Syndy M. Conger, "Sensibility Restored: Radcliffe's Answer to Lewis's *The Monk*," in *Gothic Fictions: Prohibition/Transgression*, ed. Kenneth W. Graham (New York: AMS Press, 1989), pp. 113–49.

17. For a discussion of Radcliffe's source material on the Inquisition, see John Thomson, "Ann Radcliffe's Use of Philippus van Limborch's *The History of the Inquisition*," *English Language Notes* 18 (1980), pp. 31–33; and Mark H. Hennelly, Jr., "'The Slow Torture of Delay': Reading *The Italian*," *Studies in the Humanities* 14 (1987), pp. 1–17.

18. Edward Peters reviews the treatment of Inquisitorial procedures in art and literature in *Inquisition* (New York: Free Press, 1988), pp. 189–230. For a survey of Inquisitorial methods, about which Radcliffe appears to have been well informed, see John Tedeschi, *The Prosecution of Heresy: Collected Studies on the Inquisition in Early Modern Italy* (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1991), especially chap. 5, "The Organization and Procedures of the Roman Inquisition: A Sketch," pp. 127–228.

19. In *Horror Fiction in the Protestant Tradition* (Hong Kong: Macmillan Press, 1988), Victor Sage argues that the gothic/horror tradition beginning in the late eighteenth century was motivated by Protestant anxiety about Catholic emancipation. For discussions of the enlightenment critique of torture, and refutations of its "fairy tale" representation of the actual practice of torture, see John H. Langbein, *Torture and the Law of Proof* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), as well as Edward Peters, *Torture* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985). Arguing with very different purposes, Peters and Sage alike see *The Italian* as

wholeheartedly typifying either the Protestant or the humanitarian-progressivist critique of torture, and pay no attention to Vivaldi's subsequent tribute to Inquisitorial candor.

20. Susan C. Greenfield observes this in "Veiled Desires," pp. 73–89, and I am much indebted to her for it.

21. According to Montague Summers, the inaccuracies in Radcliffe's representation of Catholic ceremonies proceed more from sheer ignorance (with its attendant exoticism) than from anti-Catholic feeling. See *The Gothic Quest: A History of the Gothic Novel* (London: The Fortune Press, 1938), pp. 193–94.

Chapter Six

1. On the theatrical and therefore potentially fraudulent structure of sympathy, see David Marshall, *Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelley* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

2. For an excellent analysis of the enablements and disablements of patriarchal identification in the careers of two of Burney's contemporaries, see Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Their Fathers' Daughters: Hannah More, Maria Edgeworth, and Patriarchal Complicity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

3. *Evelina, or, The History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World,* ed. Edward A. and Lillian D. Bloom (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 7, 9.

4. *Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame D'Arblay),* 12 vols., eds. Joyce Hemlow and Edward A. Bloom (Oxford; Clarendon, 1972–84), vol. III, pp. 185–86.

5. Burney, *Journals and Letters,* vol. II, pp. 345–46. My reading of this incident follows in the tradition established by Margaret A. Doody, *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988), pp. 168–69, and Julia Epstein, *The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pp. 29–33 et passim.

6. Julia Epstein, *The Iron Pen,* p. 83.

7. Gary Kelly takes a very different view, characterizing "the absence of 'politics' of any kind [in *Camilla*] as a riposte to the 'Democrats,' the English Jacobins, who were busy appropriating the 'modern novel' to a radical form of social criticism." See his *English Fiction of the Romantic Period* (London: Longman, 1989), p. 48. Margaret Doody emphasizes the relation of *Camilla* to the progressive fiction of the 1790s, especially to *Caleb Williams;* see *Frances Burney,* pp. 245, 251, 262–63.

8. For discussions of government actions against dissent, see E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon, 1964); pp. 82–83, 485–94, 582–83, 593–99; George Stead Veitch, *The Genesis of Parlia-*

mentary Reform (London: Constable, 1964), pp. 335–37. On Austen's treatment of this context, Robert Hopkins's essay is still unsurpassed; see "General Tilney and Affairs of State: The Political Gothic of *Northanger Abbey*," *Philological Quarterly* 57 (1978), pp. 213–24.

9. For Burney's sensitivity to treason charges, see *Journals and Letters,* vol. III, p. 63.

10. See Doody, *Frances Burney,* pp. 199–205.

11. Burney, *Journals and Letters,* vol. III, p. 117. Burney, it must be said, is joking here, for the "mystery" in question refers to her playful suggestion that her new novel will have no title whatsoever. Still, there is much internal evidence to suggest that *Udolpho* was seriously on Burney's mind.

12. Doody, *Frances Burney,* p 251. See also p. 239.

13. Edward A. and Lillian D. Bloom write that Burney herself thought her "moral dicta prolonged beyond narrative limits" in their Introduction to *Camilla,* p. xxi; and Hemlow argues that *Camilla* is a "courtesy book" and that its moralizing mars it, in Joyce Hemlow, *The History of Fanny Burney* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1958), pp. 259ff. Ellen Moers maintains that Burney "ground out" *Camilla* in order to support her family in *Literary Women: The Great Writers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 119; Croker conceives of Burney's career as one steady decline from the youthful nubility of *Evelina* to the charmless decay of *The Wanderer,* and the intermediate *Camilla* as scarcely tolerable; see *Quarterly Review* 11 (1814), pp. 123–30; Mary Lascelles contrasts Burney's ostensibly Johnsonian straining after grandiloquence with Austen's easier style in *Jane Austen and Her Art* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 104.

14. For discussions of the origins and functions of camp, see Susan Sontag, "Notes on 'Camp,'" in *Against Interpretation* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1961), pp. 275–92; Mark Booth, *Camp* (London: Quartet Books, 1983); Andrew Ross, "Uses of Camp," in *No Respect: American Intellectuals and Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1989).

15. See Burney, *Journals and Letters,* vol. III, p. 277, n. 2. See Stuart Tave's discussion of late permutations of the "amiable humorist," especially Colman's *John Bull; or the Englishman's Fireside* (produced 1803), in *The Amiable Humorist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 227–29.

16. Burney, *Journals and Letters,* vol. III, p. 277.

17. The extent to which cross-dressing subverts or reconsolidates gender codes is variously debated in Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnivalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Civilization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986), pp. 253–89; Mary Russo, "Female Grotesques: Carnival and Theory," *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies,* ed. Teresa de Lauretis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 213–27; and Kristina Straub, *Divided Fictions: Fanny Burney and Feminine Strategy* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), pp. 213–15.

18. On Burney's awareness of George's madness, see Doody, *Frances Burney*, pp. 194–95.

19. Laurence Sterne, *Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, ed. J. Gardner Stout, Jr. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), p. 271.

20. *Sentimental Journey*, p. 275.

21. For a splendid discussion of the political import of Sterne's sentimentality see, Judith Frank, "'A Man Who Laughs Is Never Dangerous': Character and Class in Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*," *ELH* 56 (1989), pp. 97–124. I am also grateful for Joanne Cutting-Gray's theoretically informed analysis of the phenomenology of female difficulties, and of the conflict between sensibility and the cold watcher, which is germane here; see *Woman As 'Nobody' and the Novels of Fanny Burney* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1992), pp. 54ff.

22. Doody, *Frances Burney*, pp. 230–33.

23. Doody, *Frances Burney*, p. 250. Doody notes that Burney's sister Esther perceived a likeness between Frances and Arlbery.

24. Burney, *Journals and Letters*, vol. III, p. 117.

25. Hemlow, *Fanny Burney*, pp. 259ff.; and Hemlow, "Fanny Burney and the Courtesy Books," *PMLA* 65 (1950), pp. 732–61. My reading here concurs with Katharine M. Rogers's claim that Burney cannot be construed as consciously satirizing conventional morality in *Camilla*: see *Frances Burney: The World of "Female Difficulties"* (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), pp. 104–5.

26. Burney, *Journals and Letters*, vol. III, p. 229 (to Dr. Burney, November 14, 1796). Burney is referring to the *Monthly Review*, which recommended *Camilla* "as a guide for the conduct of young females in the most important circumstances and situations of life"; see *Monthly Review* xxi (October 1796), p. 163 [156–63].

Chapter Seven

1. The *British Critic*, n.s., 43 (April 1814), p. 385 [374–386].

2. For an overview of the backlash against Wollstonecraft, see Claire Tomalin, *The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft* (New York: Signet Classics, 1974), pp. 221–50.

3. Kristina Straub presents Burney's playing off of the good girl (Ellis/Juliet) against the bad girl (Elinor) as a triumph of feminist "strategy," a strategy characteristic of her self-division; see Kristina Straub, *Divided Fictions: Fanny Burney and Feminine Strategy* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), pp. 182–220; Julia Epstein detects motherlodes of feminist fervor throughout the novel in *The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pp. 175–91; and Burney

emerges from Margaret A. Doody's accounts of this novel as a tragic skeptic, too sensitive to and affected by the mystery of human suffering to be taken in by ideologues of any stripe, and thus doomed by her own superiority to partisan politics to give offense to all sides: "The novel was subversively romantic and democratic, praising where it ought to condemn and censuring where it ought to praise"; see *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988), p. 333.

4. [John Wilson Croker,] *Quarterly Review* (April 1814), pp. 125–26.

5. *The Edinburgh Review* 24 (February 1815), pp. 337, 338.

6. Doody summarizes and rebuts Burney's hostile reviewers in *Frances Burney*, pp. 332–35.

7. "Case of the Suffering Clergy in France" (1792), the *Times*, September 18, 1792. For a discussion of efforts to assist the emigrant clergy, see Robert R. Dozier, *For King, Constitution, and Country* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1983), pp. 38ff.; and Seamus Deane, *The French Revolution and Enlightenment in England, 1789–1832* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), pp. 21–27.

8. Burney, *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy* (London, 1793). Rpt. with Hannah More, *Considerations on Religion and Public Education* [1793] (1st American Edition, 1794), ed. Claudia L. Johnson (Los Angeles: Augustan Reprint Society, 1990), pp. 22–25.

9. Burney, *Brief Reflections*, pp. 4, 2.

10. *Edinburgh Review* 24 (February 1815), pp. 336–37. Julia Epstein also discusses Hazlitt's views of women's minds at some length, although she does not believe, as I do, that Burney's novel is itself implicated in the same discourse that damns it in Hazlitt's eyes. See *The Iron Pen*, pp. 210–13.

11. See, for example, Hannah More's distinction, which had very wide currency. She maintains that women "excel in details; but they do not so much generalize their ideas as men, nor do their minds seize a great subject with so large a grasp. They are acute observers, and accurate judges of life and manners, as far as their own sphere of observations extends; but they describe a smaller circle. A woman sees the world, as it were, from a little elevation in her own garden, whence she makes an exact survey of home scenes, but takes not in that wider range of distant prospects which he who stands on a loftier eminence commands. Women have a certain *tact* which often enables them to feel what is just, more instantaneously than they can define it." In *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (Boston, 1802), vol. II, chap. 14, p. 170. Like Hazlitt, then, More attributes niceness of mind and a fondness for detailed views to females, but reserves the clearly superior capacities for grandeur and generality to men.

12. *Gentleman's Magazine* 84 (June 1814), p. 579. Although the reviewer notes that *The Wanderer* would make "a much stronger impression" if it had "appeared when the infatuation alluded to reigned in full force," he recommends it as "an historical antidote to any lurking remnants of poisonous doctrines that

still make their appearance at intervals, as our courts of justice too plainly testify" (p. 579).

13. For a discussion of the degrading and sexually ambiguating properties of stage acting as these were understood throughout the eighteenth century, see Kristina Straub, *Sexual Suspects: Eighteenth-Century Players and Sexual Ideology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 3–23.

14. For Katharine M. Rogers, this passage exposes the tendencies of 1790s radicals—especially radicals like Wollstonecraft and Hays—to declare themselves rationalists only to be controlled by their passions. See *Frances Burney: The World of "Female Difficulties"* (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), pp. 162–65.

15. Doody, *Frances Burney*, p. 350.

16. *Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney (Madame D'Arblay)*, 12 vols., eds. Joyce Hemlow and Edward A. Bloom (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972–84), vol. I. p. 22.

Afterword

1. For the most recent full-scale assertion of janeism, see Roger Gard, *Jane Austen's Novels: The Art of Clarity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

2. Lionel Trilling, "*Emma* and the Legend of Jane Austen," in *Jane Austen's Emma: A Casebook*, ed. David Lodge (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 130, 124. Trilling's essay was originally published as an introduction to the Riverside Edition of *Emma* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1957).

3. Sedgwick notes the virulent response to her paper in the expanded article version, "Jane Austen and the Masturbating Girl," *Critical Inquiry* 17 (1991), pp. 818–37.

4. Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia Farnham, *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), p. 143.

5. Edmund Wilson, "A Long Talk about Jane Austen," in *Classics and Commercials: A Literary Chronicle of the Forties* (New York: Farrar & Strauss, 1950), pp. 201–3.

6. Marvin Mudrick, *Jane Austen: Irony as Defense and Discovery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952), p. 203.

7. Mark Schorer, "The Humiliation of Emma Woodhouse," *Literary Review* 2 (1959), pp. 547–63; rpt. in *Jane Austen: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Ian Watt (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 107. Helen Corsa also notes the "homosexual components" of Emma's relations with Miss Taylor and Harriet, but nevertheless concludes with Schorer that Emma's narcissism withholds her from the fullness of sexual feeling; in "A Fair But Frozen Maid," *Literature and Psychology* 19 (1969), p. 107.

8. Wayne Booth, *A Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago

Press, 1961), pp. 243–66; rpt in Lodge (ed.), *Casebook*, pp. 137–56.

9. Charlotte Smith, *Montalbert* (London, 1795), p. 118.

10. The "humiliation" school of *Emma* criticism is almost too populous to give an accounting for. Along with discussions by Booth and Schorer cited above, other notable celebrations of Emma's humiliation include C. S. Lewis, "A Note on Jane Austen," *Essays in Criticism* 4 (1954), rpt. in Watt (ed.), *Jane Austen*, pp. 25–34; Bernard Paris, *Character and Conflict in Jane Austen's Novels: A Psychological Approach* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978); and Jane Nardin, *Those Elegant Decorums: The Concept of Propriety in Jane Austen's Novels* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1973). Eve Sedgwick's critique of the "Girl Being Taught a Lesson" mode of Austenian criticism ought, in my view, to be required reading for everyone interested in writing and reading about Austen; in Watt (ed.), *Jane Austen*, pp. 833–34.

11. Wilson, "A Long Talk about Jane Austen," in *Classics and Commercials*, p. 201; Mudrick, *Jane Austen*, pp. 192–93; Joseph M, Duffy, "Emma: The Awakening from Innocence," *ELH* 21 (1954), p. 42; Lionel Trilling, in Lodge (ed.), *Casebook*, p. 130; Tanner, *Jane Austen* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 180.

12. Lionel Trilling, in Lodge (ed.), *Casebook*, p. 134.

13. Nancy Armstrong illuminates Emma's respect for the manliness of Robert Martin's style; see *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 146–50.

14. For an excellent discussion of the opposition of the "impure, dishonest, dissembling, imitative, servile" French to the "moral sobriety, individual independence, and collective fellowship" of the English, see Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740–1830* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987), pp. 230, 231ff. My discussion of the anti-French elements of *Emma* has also been informed by Stella Cottrell, "The Devil on Two Sticks: Franco-Phobia in 1803," in *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity*, ed. Raphael Samuel (London: Routledge, 1989); and Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

15. For a compelling study of Emma's reproduction with Harriet of the same heterosexual protocols Wollstonecraft lambastes in *Rights of Woman*, see Allison Sulloway, "Emma Woodhouse and *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, *Wordsworth Circle* 7 (1976), pp. 320–32. Ruth Perry also reads *Emma* as a plea for the enlargement of female friendship; see "Interrupted Friendships in Jane Austen's *Emma*," *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 5 (1986), pp. 185–202.

Adeline Mowbray (Opie), 166
Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in Behalf of Women (Hays), 10
Arblay, Madame d'. *See* Burney, Frances
Armstrong, Nancy, 17–18
Astell, Mary (*A Serious Proposal to the Ladies, for the Advancement of Their True and Greatest Interest*), 79
Austen, Jane: influence of *Belinda* on, 195; influence of *Montalbert* on, 195; influence of *Wanderer* on, 195; influences on, 191, 195; rhetorical strategies of, 18–19, 55; sentimentality in, 1. Works: *Emma*, 8, 92–3, 191–203; *Mansfield Park*, 18, 164, 199; *Northanger Abbey*, 92, 98, 116, 118, 120, 134, 191, 199. *See also individual works*

Bage, Robert: *Hermsprong; Or, Man As He Is Not*, 75–6; *Man As He Is*, 75–6
Barker-Benfield, G. J., 13, 24–5, 41–2
Belinda (Edgeworth), 195
Bisset, Robert (*Modern Literature: A Novel*), 11
Blackstone, Sir William, 26
Bloch, Marc, 120
Booth, Wayne, 194
Boswell, James (*The Life of Samuel Johnson*), 121
Bowles, William Lisle ("The Right Honorable Edmund Burke"), 8
Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy (Burney), 15; and authority, 174–5
Brooke, Henry, 5
Burgh, James, 25
Burke, Edmund, 2–9, 11, 13–15, 17, 30–3, 37, 74; Bowles's tribute to, 8; caricatured by Holland, 122; chivalry in, 63, 112; gothicism as political critique in, 122–5; "humanity" in, 8. Works: *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, 26–9, 32, 84, 121; *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, xvi, 2–6, 8, 11, 13–14, 25–9, 31, 33–4, 38–9, 43–6; *Reflections* and *Emma*, 199–200; *Reflections* and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 103; *Reflections* and *The Romance of the Forest*, 77; "atrocity" in, 121–2; chivalry in, 82, 120; image of the state in, 105–6, 121–2, 174; Louis XVI in, 46, 151; Marie-Antoinette in, 46, 151, 203; "prejudice" in, 181–2. *See also individual works*
Burney, Fanny. *See* Burney, Frances (Madame d'Arblay)
Burney, Frances (Madame d'Arblay), 25, 77–8; and Austen, 195, 202–3; influences on, 143; and male sentimentality, 16–17; as Mrs. Arlbery in *Camilla*, 161–2; and *Mysteries of Udolpho*, 106–7; and sentimentality, 1–3; politics of, 14–5; rhetorical strategies of, 12, 18–19; suffering womanhood in, 141–2. Works: *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy*, 15, 174–5; *Camilla*, xvi, 2–3, 8, 11–12, 14, 17, 61, 89, 141–64, 198; *Cecilia*, 15, 128, 142, 145–6, 161; *Evelina*, 142–3, 145, 161, 165; *The Wanderer*, 17, 129–30, 142, 145, 165–88, 202–3. *See also individual works*
Butler, Marilyn, 1, 6–7

Caleb Williams (Godwin), 8, 137
Camilla, or, a Picture of Youth (Burney), xvi, 2–3, 8, 11–12, 14, 17, 61, 89, 141–64; Burney as Mrs. Arlbery in, 161–2; and *Cecilia*, 145–6, 161; crisis of authority as theme of, 143–4; effeminacy in, 160–1; and *Emma*, 198; excess in, 162–3; female emo-

tion in, 154–6, 158; female homoeroticism in, 162–3; gender disruption in, 147–8; genre of, 163–4; madwoman as sentimental trope, 153–4; and *Mansfield Park*, 164; and *Mary*, 162; masculine sentimentality in, 146–51, 156–7; narrative in, 146, 160, 163–4; and *Othello*, 146, 149, 158; politics in, 144–5, 155; sentimentality in, 142, 151, 156–60; and *A Sentimental Journey*, 153–4; social critique in, 145–6, 155; suffering womanhood in, 142–3, 152–3; veneration of authority in, 142
Canning, George, 6–7
Cartwright, Mrs. H. (*The Platonic Marriage*), 51–2
Castle of Otranto, The (Walpole), 98
Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne, The (Radcliffe), 76–7
Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress (Burney), 15, 128; and *Camilla*, 142, 145–6, 161; and *The Italian*, 128; as social critique, 142
Cibber, Colley. *See* Vanbrugh, Sir John, and Colley Cibber
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 59, 125
Colley, Linda, 15, 99
Cottom, Daniel, 120–1
Crane, R. S., 12
Crewe, Frances Anne, 150
Croker, John Wilson, 186
Cruikshank, George, 15

Defoe, Daniel (*Robinson Crusoe*), 1; and *The Wanderer*, 185–6
Doody, Margaret Anne, 15
Duffy, Joseph M., 197

Edgeworth, Maria (*Belinda*), 195
Eliza Warwick (anonymous), 51–2
Emile (Rousseau), 32, 42, 75, 88
Emma (Austen), 8, 191–203; as act of homage, 202–3; and Booth, 194; and Burney, 192, 195, 202–3; chivalry in, 201; class in, 196; compared to *Mansfield Park*, 197, 199; construction of "natural" manhood in, 201–2; effeminacy in, 199–200, 202; Emma, 191–4; Emma as lesbian, 193; Emma as pathological, 194; female manliness in, 192, 202; fraternal love in, 201; gender definition in, 194–6, 199; genre of, 192; and Hays, 196; heterosexuality in, 202; male authority in, 193; masculinity in, 196–202; and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 198–9; and Mudrick, 194; and Radcliffe, 192, 202–3; sentimental masculinity in, 198, 200–1; succeeds where Wollstonecraft fails, 191; and Schorer, 194; and Trilling, 191–2, 194–5, 197; Trilling's "national feeling" in, 191–2; use of *The Romance of the Forest* in, 92–3; and *The Wanderer*, 195, 202–3; and Wilson, 193–4; and Wollstonecraft, 202–3
Epstein, Julia, 144
Evelina, or, a Young Woman's Entrance into the World (Burney), 165; and *Camilla*, 145, 161; and canonical fiction, 143; as social critique, 142

Farnham, Marynia. *See* Lundberg, Ferdinand, and Marynia Farnham
Fielding, Henry: *Joseph Andrews*, 1, 101; and *The Romance of the Forest*, 86
Fordyce, James, 24
Foucault, Michel, 2
Francis, Sir Philip, 4–5
French Revolution, 98–9, 165–6, 181, 183

Garrick, David, 6
Gaston de Blondeville, or the Court of Henry III Keeping Festival in Ardenne (Radcliffe), 120, 136–7
Genlis, Madame Stéphanie Félicité de (*The Rival Mothers; or, Calumny*), 10–11
Gillray, James, 6–7
Girard, René, 66
Godwin, William, 1, 10–11. Works: *Caleb Williams*, 8, 137; *Memoirs of the Author of 'The Rights of Woman,'* 3, 10–12, 18, 26, 39–40, 48, 53; use of Goethe's *Werter* [*sic*] in, 12, 53
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von (*The Sorrows of Young Werther*), 12, 53

Goldsmith, Oliver, 5, 14, 53
Gregory, Dr. John, 24, 63

Hamilton, Elizabeth (*Memoirs of Modern Philosophers*), 166
Hamlet (Shakespeare), 61–3; in *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 62, 100, 112
Hays, Mary, 36, 195–6. Works: *Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in Behalf of Women*, 10; *The Victim of Prejudice*, 166
Hazlitt, William, 180–1
Hermsprong; Or, Man As He Is Not (Bage), 75–6
Historical and Moral View of the Origin and Progress of the French Revolution, An (Wollstonecraft), 38–9
Hobbes, Thomas, 12–13, 40
Hume, David, 26

Italian, The (Radcliffe), 10, 79–80, 117–37; and Burke's chivalry, 120; convent in, 131, 134–6; female homoeroticism in, 134–5; gothic elements in, 120–3, 125; landscape in, 117–19; masculine sentimentality in, 129; masculinity in, 134–5; misogyny in, 129–31; and *The Monk*, 126, 131, 133, 135; and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 104, 109, 112, 119, 124, 126–7, 129, 133; narrative strategies in, 124–5, 133–4, 136–7; and politics, 119–20, 131–3, 136; reverses Burke in, 123; sentimentality in, 133, 136–7; as social critique, 125–6; suffering in, 119–21; *Twelfth Night* in, 135; use of history in, 16, 119–23, 131–3; "veiling" and "unveiling" in, 125–9, 133–5

janeism, 191
Janes, Regina M., 24
Johnson, Samuel (*Rasselas*), 32, 36, 121; and Burney, 146–7, 153; *Rasselas*, 5, 52, 79
Joseph Andrews (Fielding), 101

Kay, Carol, 12–14, 35
Kaye-Smith, Sheila. *See* Stern, G. B., and Sheila Kaye-Smith
Kelly, Gary, 1, 61, 68, 101
Kelly, Hugh, 5

Lauretis, Teresa de, 119
Lewis, Matthew Gregory, 1, 122–3, 125
Lewis, Monk. *See* Lewis, Matthew Gregory
Life of Samuel Johnson, The (Boswell), 121
Lundberg, Ferdinand, and Marynia Farnham, 193

Macaulay, Elizabeth, 36, 45
Macbeth (Shakespeare), 9, 100; and *The Romance of the Forest*, 74–5, 77, 81, 91
Mackenzie, Henry (*The Man of Feeling*), 5; *The Man of Feeling*, 61
Man As He Is (Bage), 75–6
Man of Feeling, The (Mackenzie), 61
Mansfield Park (Austen), 18; and *Camilla*, 164; and *Emma*, 199
Markley, Robert, 12
Mary, A Fiction (Wollstonecraft), 47–69, 79, 187–8; as antisentimental, 51–3, 57–8; and *Camilla*, 162; female body in, 49, 52–5; gender and genre in, 47, 49–58; and Godwin, 53; homoeroticism in, 52–8; homophobia in, 47–8; narrative strategies in, 47–58; as protolesbian narrative, 16, 48; and *Rasselas*, 52; "romantic friendship" in, 48, 52–7
masculinity, 12–14; Burke's "man of feeling" in Wollstonecraft, 7–8; constructed as *lacrimo, ergo sum*, 5; in Austen, 196–202; in Burke's *Reflections*, 4–6; in Radcliffe, 75–6, 84–6, 134–5; in Wollstonecraft, 7–8, 15–16, 24–5; male femininity in Wollstonecraft, 29; republican masculinity in Wollstonecraft, 59–60. *See also* sentimentality, sexuality, Woman, *and individual works*
Massé, Michelle, 97
Memoirs of Modern Philosophers (Hamilton), 166
Memoirs of the Author of 'The Rights of Woman' (Godwin), 10–12, 26, 39–40, 183
Meyers, Mitzi, 26

Millenium Hall (Scott), 79
Milton, John, 32
Modern Literature: A Novel (Bisset), 10
Monk, The (Lewis): and Radcliffe, 122–3, 126, 131, 133, 135
Montalbert (Smith), 195
Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de Secondat, 13
More, Hannah (*Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*), 8–10, 13
Mudrick, Marvin, 194
Mullan, John, 12
Mulvey, Laura, 119
Mysteries of Udolpho, The (Radcliffe), 80, 82, 91–2, 95–116; and Burke, 105–6; and *Camilla*, 145, 158–9, 164; chivalry in, 103–4; and *Emma*, 198–9; and female heroic mode, 95–6, 100, 108; female sentimentality in, 101–3, 107, 114; gender as central problem in, 97; gothic in, 95–8, 106, 110, 113; and *Hamlet*, 62, 99–100, 112; and *The Italian*, 119, 124, 126–7, 129, 133; male sentimentality in, 98–104, 108–9, 112, 114–5; narrative strategies in, 102, 110–14; and *Northanger Abbey*, 92, 98, 116; suffering womanhood in, 96–8, 106, 111–2, 114, 116; use of history in, 98–9, 114

Northanger Abbey (Austen), 98, 116, 144, 196, 199; defense of novel in, 191; and *The Italian*, 118, 120, 134; use of *The Mysteries of Udolpho* in, 92, 98, 116

Opie, Ameilia (*Adeline Mowbray*), 166
Othello (Shakespeare): and *Camilla*, 146, 149, 158

Paine, Thomas, 25–6, 38, 67–8; *The Rights of Man*, 75
Paulson, Ronald, 76
Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, A (Burke): and *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, 26–9; and *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, 32
Platonic Marriage, The (Cartwright), 51–2
Pocock, J. G. A., 98
Polwhele, Richard (*The Unsex'd Females*), 44; *The Unsex'd Females*, 8–10
Poovey, Mary, 50–1
Price, Dr. Richard, 6, 15, 25
Priestley, Joseph, 3–4, 25
Provoked Husband, The (Vanbrugh), 169, 178, 183

Radcliffe, Ann, 1, 3, 12, 14–18, 25, 202–3; gothic in, 75–6, 82, 85; misogyny in, 80. Works: *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, 76–7; *Gaston de Blondeville*, 120, 136–7; *The Italian*, 10, 16, 79–80, 104, 109, 112, 117–37; *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 62, 80, 82, 91–2, 95–116, 198–9; *The Romance of the Forest*, 73–93, 97, 99, 100, 104, 119, 122, 126, 129, 133; *A Sicilian Romance*, 76, 116, 124–5. *See also individual works*
Rasselas (Johnson), 5, 52, 79, 101
Reflections on the Revolution in France (Burke), xvi, 2–6, 8, 11, 13–14, 25–9, 31, 33–4, 38–9, 43–6, 77, 103–5, 120–2, 125, 151, 174, 181, 199, 203; "atrocity" in, 121–2; chivalry as ideology in, 2–6, 13, 82, 120; and *Emma*, 199–200; French Revolution as crisis of sentiment, 3–4; as gothic literature, 3; image of the state in, 105–6, 121–2, 174; Louis XVI in, 46, 151; Marie-Antoinette in, 2–5, 11, 13, 15, 46, 151, 203; and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 103; "prejudice" in, 181–2; and *The Romance of the Forest*, 77
Richardson, Samuel, 1, 5
"Right Honorable Edmund Burke, The" (Bowles), 8
Rights of Man, The (Paine), 75
Rival Mothers, The; or, Calumny (de Genlis), 10–11
Romance of the Forest, The (Radcliffe), 73–93, 119, 122, 126, 129, 133, 171; allusion in, 74–7, 81, 91; class

in, 82–3, 93; construction of masculinity, 75–6, 84–6; education as theme in, 100; "feminated" in, 99; and Fielding, 86; gender in, 90–1; history in, 93; influence of educational writing on, 79; and *The Italian,* 119, 122, 126, 129, 133; and *Macbeth,* 74–5, 77, 81, 91; male sentimentality in, 85–90; and *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* 104; narrative strategies in, 76–8, 86; and Rousseau, 77; rule of law in, 91–2; sentimentality in, 77–81, 83, 91–3, 97; sentimental heterosexuality in, 88–92; social critique in, 77–9, 89–90; "unsexing" in, 81–2; women's friendships in, 79–80
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 6, 9, 13–15, 17, 24–5, 32–3, 44, 63–4, 157; and *The Romance of the Forest,* 77; and *The Mysteries of Udolpho,* 86; *Emile,* 32, 42, 75, 88

Schorer, Mark, 194
Scott, Sarah (*Millenium Hall*), 79
Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky, 50, 66, 192
Sentimental Journey through France and Italy, A (Sterne): and *Camilla,* 153–4; and Burke's *Reflections,* 5
sentimentality, 1–7, 12–14, 15–18; allied with gothicism, 1; antisentimentality in Wollstonecraft, 23, 32, 51–3, 57–8; as disruption of verisimilitude, 2; chivalric, 6, 11–12, 15–16; fall of sentimentalized manhood in Burke's *Reflections,* 4; female sentimentality in Radcliffe, 101–3, 107, 114; male sentimentality in Austen, 198, 200–1; male sentimentality in Burney, 16–17, 146–51, 156–7; male sentimentality in Radcliffe, 85–90, 98–104, 108–9, 112, 114–15, 129; male sentimentality in Wollstonecraft, 97; politicized, 3; "romantic" friendship, 48, 52–7; sentimental fiction, 1, 3, 5; sentimental heterosexuality in Radcliffe, 88–92; sentimentality in Burney, 1–3, 142, 151, 156–60, 168, 172–4; sentimentality in Radcliffe, 77–81, 83–4, 91–3, 97, 133, 136–7; sentimentality in Wollstonecraft, 43–6, 54–5; sentiments about sex, 11. *See also* masculinity, sexuality, woman *and individual works*
Serious Proposal to the Ladies, for the Advancement of Their True and Greatest Interest, A (Astell), 79
sexuality: effeminacy, 4, 81–2; effeminacy in Austen, 199–200; effeminacy in Burney, 160–1; "equivocal beings" defined, 11–12; gender disruption in Burney, 147–8; gender in Radcliffe, 90–1; heterosexuality as political duty, 17; heterosexuality in Wollstonecraft, 42–3, 82; homophobia in Wollstonecraft, 11–12, 24, 47–8; sexuality in Wollstonecraft, 42–5; "unsexing", 8–10, 81–2. *See also* masculinity, sentimentality, Woman, *and individual works*
Shakespeare, William: *Hamlet,* 61–3, 99–100, 112; *Macbeth,* 9, 74–5, 77, 81, 91, 100, 135; *Othello,* 146, 149, 158; *Twelfth Night,* 135. *See also individual works*
Sicilian Romance, A (Radcliffe), 76, 124–5; and suffering womanhood, 116
Siddons, Sarah, 6
Smith, Adam, 35
Smith, Charlotte, 124. Works: *Montalbert,* 195; *The Young Philosopher,* 10
Sorrows of Werther, The (Goethe), 12, 53
Stern, G. B., and Sheila Kaye-Smith, 193
Sterne, Laurence (*A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*), 5, 13–14, 60–1; and *Camilla,* 153–4; and *The Romance of the Forest,* 86
Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education (More), 8–10, 13

Tale of the Times, A (West), 8, 16, 166
Talleyrand-Périgord, Charles Maurice de, 24, 32
Tanner, Tony, 197–8
Thoughts on the Education of Daughters (Wollstonecraft), 24
Todd, Janet, 6–7, 64
Tompkins, J. M. S., 1

Trilling, Lionel, 191–2, 194–5, 197
Twelfth Night (Shakespeare): and *The Italian*, 135

Unsex'd Females, The (Polwhele), 8–10

Vanbrugh, Sir John, and Colley Cibber, *The Provoked Husband*, 169
Victim of Prejudice, The (Hays), 166
Vindication of the Rights of Men, A (Wollstonecraft), 16, 25–30, 178; and Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry*, 26–9; and Burke's *Reflections*, 25–6, 30; chivalry in, 63; female body in, 48; as feminist critique, 27–9; and heterosexuality, 82
Vindication of the Rights of Woman, A (Wollstonecraft), 16, 23–46; as anti-sentimental, 23, 32; and Burke's chivalry, 33–40; and Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry*, 32; chivalry in, 63; class in, 66; as educational policy, 24, 43; female body in, 48–9; feminist agenda of, 23–4, 35, 39; and heterosexuality, 42–3, 82; homophobia in, 24; Louis XIV in, 35; male body in, 40–2; male femininity in, 29; masculinity in, 24–5; maternity in, 47–8; mixed genre of, 23; republican agenda in, 23–5, 39; republican masculinity in, 59–60; rhetorical strategies in, 31, 33, 40; sentimental ideology in, 43–6, 54–5; sexuality in, 42–5; and Adam Smith, 35; woman as heroine, 49; woman as "unsexed," 49

Walpole, Horace (*The Castle of Otranto*), 98
Wanderer, The; or, Female Difficulties (Burney), 17, 142, 145, 165–88, 195, 202–3; absent male authority in, 178; and *Camilla*, 173; class in, 169–70, 177–8; and *Emma*, 195, 202–3; and *Evelina*, 165; female rule in, 175–9; and Hazlitt, 180–1; and *The Italian*, 179; misogyny in, 129–30, 170–3, 176–7; misogyny and genre, 180–1; and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 177; politics in, 166, 170; "prejudice" as political category in, 181–5; and *The Provoked Husband*, 169; reception of, 166–7; reviewed by John Wilson Croker, 186; sentimentality in, 168, 172–4; summary of, 167–8
Watt, Ian, 1, 2, 17–18
West, Jane (*A Tale of the Times*), 8, 16, 166
Wilson, Edmund, 193–4, 197
Wollstonecraft, Mary, 1, 3, 7–10, 14–18, 82, 124, 155–6, 162, 202–3; "equivocal beings," 11–12; homophobia of, 47–8; masculine sentimentality in, 97; and *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 98, 108. Works: *An Historical and Moral View of the Origin and Progress of the French Revolution*, 38–9; *Mary, A Fiction*, 16, 47–69, 187–8; *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters*, 24; *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, 16, 25–30, 48, 63; *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, 16, 23–46, 47–9, 54–5, 59–60, 63, 66; *The Wrongs of Woman; or, Maria*, 16, 28–9, 58–69, 136
Woman: convents, 131, 134–6; female body in Wollstonecraft, 48–9, 52–5; female emotion in Burney, 154–6, 158; female homoeroticism in Burney, 162–3; female homoeroticism in Radcliffe, 134–5; female manliness in Austen, 192, 202; feminist literary history and politics, 2, 17; and image of state in Burke, 105–6, 121–2, 174; lesbianism in Austen, 193; madwoman as sentimental trope, 153–4; Marie-Antoinette in Burke's *Reflections*, 46, 151, 203; *Mary* as protolesbian narrative, 16, 48; maternity and Burke's Marie-Antoinette, 151; maternity in Wollstonecraft, 47–8; misogyny in Burney, 129–30, 170–3, 176–7; misogyny in Radcliffe, 80, 129–31; suffering womanhood and absent agency, 17; suffering womanhood in Burney, 141–3, 152–3; suffering womanhood in Radcliffe, 96–8, 106, 111–12, 114, 116, 119–21;

woman as heroine, 49; woman as unsexed, 49. *See also* masculinity, sentimentality, sexuality, *and individual works*
Wordsworth, William, 59–60
Wrongs of Woman, The; or Maria (Wollstonecraft), 16, 28–9, 171; allusions in, 60–3; allusions to *Hamlet* in, 61–3; chivalry in, 63; class in, 66–7; collective identity of women in, 66–7; critique of sentimental heterosexuality in, 58–69; dramatizes *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman,* 59; female body in, 58–9, 64–5; gothic plot in, 136; heterosexuality in, 61–4; in literary career of Wollstonecraft, 59; madness in, 59–62; male body in, 63–4; marriage in, 59–60, 61; maternity in, 67–9; narrative structure of, 64–9; republican masculinity in, 59–60; as response to male sentimentality, 61; and Rousseau, 63–4; and Sterne, 61

Young Philosopher, The (Smith), 10